

GENDER, CULTURE AND BELONGING IN THE DIASPORIC SPACE: ZIMBABWEAN WOMEN IN BRITAIN

Loreen Chikwira

Edgehill University

PHD Thesis

March 2020

Contents Page

| | |
|---|-----------|
| Declaration | 5 |
| Acknowledgements | 6 |
| Abstract | 7 |
| Introduction | 8 |
| I.1. 'New' African Diaspora | 13 |
| I.2. Feminisation of Zimbabwean Diaspora..... | 16 |
| I.3. Outline of the Thesis | 18 |
| Chapter 1 | 27 |
| Conceptualisation of Identity and Belonging | 27 |
| 1.1. Identity in the African contexts | 28 |
| 1.2. Belonging: Space and Social Positioning | 33 |
| Chapter 2 | 37 |
| Zimbabwean Women's Cultural Identities and History of Migration. | 37 |
| 2.1. Colonisation and Impact on Cultural Identities of Shona and Ndebele women from the colonial era to Post -independence..... | 39 |
| 2.2. The Trajectory of Zimbabwean Women's Migrations from Colonialism to Current times | 46 |
| 2.3. Socio-demographic Profile of Zimbabweans in the UK | 52 |
| 2.4. Conclusion..... | 57 |
| Chapter 3 | 59 |

| | |
|---|------------|
| African feminist Standpoint Theory..... | 59 |
| 3.1. Feminist Standpoint theory | 62 |
| 3.2. African feminism | 69 |
| 3.2.1 The conceptualisation of Gender and its link with culture..... | 73 |
| 3.2.2. ‘Bride wealth’ (Roora in Shona and Lobola in Ndebele), Marriage and Family..... | 76 |
| 3.3. Conclusion | 80 |
| Chapter 4..... | 82 |
| Methodological Considerations | 82 |
| 4.1. Interpretive Phenomenology, Experience and Feminist Research | 83 |
| 4.2. Methodology in Action | 86 |
| 4.2.1. Participant recruitment | 87 |
| 4.2.2. Interview Process | 89 |
| 4.3. Interpreting and Analysis of Participant Accounts..... | 96 |
| 4.3.1. Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) | 96 |
| 4.3.2. Analysis of Focus Group Interviews..... | 97 |
| 4.3.3. Analysis of Semi-structured Interviews..... | 100 |
| 4.4. Positioning Myself in the Research Study..... | 104 |
| 4.5. Conclusion..... | 108 |
| Chapter 5..... | 110 |
| ‘Musha mukadzi’- Colonial, Cultural, and Religious Influences on Women’s Identities | 110 |
| 5.1. Gendered Identities and the Typical African Woman Dominant Narrative | 112 |
| 5.2. Production and Reproduction of Cultural Beliefs and Social Norms | 128 |

| | |
|--|------------|
| 5.3. Conclusion..... | 134 |
| Chapter 6..... | 136 |
| Contested Narratives of Belonging and the Fragmentation of Cultural Identities | 136 |
| 6.1. Negotiating belonging and (un)belonging in the diasporic space | 137 |
| 6.2. ‘Westernisation’ and the cultural impact of the diasporic space | 146 |
| 6.2.1. ‘Where is the woman’: Gender and embodiment | 156 |
| 6.3. Religious spaces: gendered identities and control of women’s bodies..... | 162 |
| 6.4. Social networks: Belonging and redefining relationships | 172 |
| 6.5 Conclusion | 183 |
| Chapter 7 | 186 |
| Reconfiguring the family dynamics | 186 |
| 7.1. Gender relations: Changing social positioning..... | 187 |
| 7.1.1. Changing work patterns..... | 188 |
| 7.1.2 Changing economic status of women | 197 |
| 7.2. Kinship relationships across transnational spaces | 209 |
| 7.3. Parenting ‘in between’ cultures | 217 |
| 7.4. Conclusion..... | 230 |
| Chapter 8..... | 234 |
| Symbolic Practices and Markers of Culture | 234 |
| 8.1. Language as Part of Cultural Heritage | 235 |
| 8.2. Cultural Values and Material Practices of Identity..... | 243 |
| Thesis conclusion | 252 |

| | |
|---|-----|
| C.1. What are the factors that have contributed to the women’s reconstruction of their cultural identities? | 258 |
| C.2. How were their cultural identities experienced and their social relationships renegotiated in Britain? What socio-cultural resources did they employ to reconstruct their cultural identities? | 261 |
| C.3. Contribution to knowledge..... | 265 |
| C.4. Limitations of the study..... | 267 |
| C.5. Future research | 268 |
| References..... | 269 |
| Appendices | 312 |
| Appendix A: Participant Information Sheet | 312 |
| Appendix B: Consent Form..... | 314 |
| Appendix C: Participant profile for the group interviews | 315 |
| Appendix D: Questions for the Focus Group Interviews..... | 316 |
| Appendix E: Questions on Individual Interviews..... | 317 |
| Appendix F: Participant profile for the Individual interviews | 318 |
| Appendix G: Example of building rapport with participant and co-constructing knowledge. | 321 |
| Appendix H: Analysis of the Group Interviews using Palmer et al. (2010) 8 step protocol | 322 |
| Appendix I: Analysis of the Rufaro’s account using Standard IPA | 326 |
| Appendix J: Comparison of all the Group Interview Themes | 327 |
| Appendix K: Superordinate Themes and Sub-themes from the Individual Interviews. | 329 |

Declaration

I declare that this thesis has been composed solely by me and that it has not been submitted, in whole or in part, in any previous application for a degree. Except where stated otherwise by reference or acknowledgment, the work presented is entirely my own.

Acknowledgements

I would like to first thank God for his goodness. Special gratitude and love to my partner Dr Phil Hutchinson, who has been so patient, while I worked late nights and he has been there to the end. A special appreciation for my Supervisors, Paul Reynolds and Dr Zana Vathi who have been patient and supported me unreservedly. Thank you to friends who helped and supported me, along the way.

Loreen Chikwira, PHD.

Gender, Culture and Belonging in the Diasporic Space: Zimbabwean Migrant Women in the UK

Abstract

Zimbabwean women in Britain have multiple cultural identities and inhabit multiple contested transnational spaces that locate them in contradictory ways. The women then must negotiate these spaces to integrate and function within these spaces. The aim of this thesis is to explore how gender intersects with culture, race, social class, and immigration status in Zimbabwean women's everyday lives in the diaspora. There is a proliferation of feminist studies on migrant women's experiences, examining how they negotiate work and family after migration. However, there is limited research on African women diaspora's gendered experiences and studying them demands African-specific theoretical tools. Current approaches are Eurocentric, use generic theoretical approaches and have viewed the women as passive subjects, formed, and constrained by external forces. This research is a phenomenological study that employs African Feminist Standpoint Theory to explore how the women redefine their cultural identities, and renegotiate their relationships within religious, social, and family spaces. Five group interviews and nine semi-structured interviews were conducted with Zimbabwean women, based in Reading, Manchester, Sheffield, Birmingham, Coventry, and Wolverhampton. The study contributes to Gender and Migration studies, by demonstrating how gendered identities are defined and redefined in women's everyday lives within spaces that have different cultural beliefs on gender and gender relations. Furthermore, the study contributes to African diaspora scholarship and demonstrates the contribution of a colonial legacy on African women in Britain, whose identities, cultures, and economic systems were shaped by colonialism, which reconstitute and reconstruct these identities within spaces of cultural intersection.

Introduction

Since the Second World War and the subsequent influx of migrants from the Commonwealth countries, ethnic minority population in Britain has increased. However, the increased multiculturalism, 11/ 7 terror attacks and its after math, have continually brought questions of minority identities, belonging and citizenship to the fore of political and social debates (Ashcroft and Bevir, 2016; Howard, 2000; Modood, 2016). Globalisation, technological advancement, and increased migration further added to questions on diversity, difference, and identity (Callero, 2003; Howard, 2000; Stets and Burke, 2000; Weedon, 2005). Current political debates on gender, migration and identity are framed within a hostile environment and the notion of the incompatibility of migrant cultures and religious beliefs with British values (Yuval Davis, Anthias and Kofman 2005).

International migration of Zimbabweans is not new, what is new is the significant increase in the number of black Zimbabweans, both men and women who left Zimbabwe and settled in countries in the west (Chikanda and Crush, 2018). Data from the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (2013) and World Bank (2016) shows that the population of Zimbabweans worldwide has grown from an estimated 263,085 in 1990 to 973,200 in 2013, an increase of over 300% in just over two decades. The Zimbabwean women constitute almost half of the Zimbabwean diaspora, who are settled in the UK. This led to what Crush and Tevera (2010) called the 'feminisation' of Zimbabwean migration. This international migration of Zimbabwean women as independent individuals is occurring within a context of a history of colonial and social control of women's movement. McGregor and Primorac (2010) add that during this time Britain was a major international

destination for Zimbabweans because of the historical connections between Britain and Zimbabwe. The data from The Office of National Statistics (ONS) International Migration Statistics show that since 2002, the number of Zimbabwean women in the UK is significantly higher than men. For example, in 2017, there were twenty thousand more women than men who were born in Zimbabwe or identify as Zimbabwean residing in the UK. It is also important to note that these figures and statistics exclude undocumented migrants and those who may have migrated using passports from other countries (McGregor, 2010).

The women find themselves living in a cultural context which has many differences to their country of origin, and these differences must be negotiated in the course of their daily lives. Issues of cultural identity construction within migration studies is focused on answering questions on what happens to identities when different cultures meet (Anthias, 2012). So, in this thesis, I seek to gain an understanding of how transnational spaces are negotiated in the women's everyday lives and the socio-cultural processes that define their cultural identities. I seek to do this by pursuing qualitative research, which is based on an analysis of data gathered through five focus groups, participant observations and nine semi-structured interviews.

In this study, I focus on black Zimbabwean women who migrated and settled in Britain between 1990 and the middle of the first decade of the 21st century. I centre on this time frame because traditionally, Zimbabwean migration both within Africa and to western countries was mainly dominated by men (Mbiba, 2005; Mlambo, 2010). However, the political crisis in Zimbabwe saw more women seeking refuge and employment in other countries including Britain. The industrial transformation in Europe provided employment opportunities for women in the care and service sectors, resulting in the feminisation of

Zimbabwean diaspora. I also concentrate on Zimbabwean women because as black, African, Zimbabwean women, they inhabit particular social locations informed by their gender, culture, religion, race and historical contexts in their experiences of gender, gender relations and power inequalities. Additionally, they also live in a country that is known for marginalising black people (Gilroy, 1987; Hall, 1996).

This study is a phenomenological exploration of how gender intersects with culture, race, immigration policies and socio-economic factors in how their cultural identities are redefined and their relationships reconfigured within contested transnational spaces. The study is phenomenological because I am interested in the participants' lived experiences within the private and public spaces and the meanings attached to the experiences and sense of belonging. The sample size was sufficient for this study, as it is an idiographic mode of inquiry (Smith 2003; 2009). The purpose of an idiographic approach is not to generalise the findings to whole populations, but to have better insight into an experience and how the individual navigates their social world and relationships within it, although comparisons with other research literature can be made to clarify the research. The women's narrations of their lives in Zimbabwe, migration journey and settlement in Britain gave an insight into how their relationships and sense of belonging are (re)constructed and (re)negotiated within transnational spaces that have diverse cultural values and beliefs on gender and gender relations. In the diasporic space the women must renegotiate gender relations which are mediated by gender equality, egalitarianism, and multi-culturalism. Furthermore, they negotiate new ascribed identities and belongings, based on race and immigration status which challenge their gendered cultural identities and further complicates their sense of belonging and social positioning as women. Drawing on arguments on the idiographic mode

of inquiry, I argue that the sample size for this study was adequate to draw logical inferences and generate understanding that can help advance knowledge in gender and migration studies and new African diaspora scholarship.

African feminist, Oyewumi (2004) argues that theorisation of African women's experiences is framed within a western lens of colonialism and imperialism that disempowers women, homogenises their experiences and imputes uniform characteristics to their lives and cultural identities (see also Narayan 1997; Okpewho and Nzegwu, 2009; Uwakweh, 2014). Consequently, these approaches created a homogenised view of African women (Mohanty, 1991; 2003). However, the universalised African female subject does not exist, instead, African women's identities are multiple and differentiated across varied axis of power hierarchies which are shaped by the intersection of gender, race, culture, marital status, class and education. The research study is grounded in African feminist standpoint theory and intersectionality. African feminist standpoint theory's philosophical underpinnings are derived from Phenomenology and the centrality of experience and gendered embodiment. African feminist standpoint theory argues that gender and identity are socially constructed within a specific culture and shaped by a specific colonial and religious history (Annan-Yao, 2002; Arnfred, 2004). Therefore, departing from these arguments, gender is employed as the main category of analysis that intersects with race, culture, colonial history, immigration labels and ascribed racialised identities in Zimbabwean women's experiences in the diaspora.

I employ an inter-disciplinary approach drawing from African diaspora scholarship; Gender and Migration studies, Sociology and Cultural studies to explore questions on gender, identity, belonging in transnational spaces. The study contributes to gender and

migration scholarship by demonstrating the everyday practises, strategies that the women employ and enact in redefining their cultural identities and renegotiating their gendered relations. The everyday strategies that migrant women use to redefine their gendered identities contribute to the theoretical debates and concepts in gender and migration research. Rodriguez, Adomako Ampofo and Mbilinyi (2015) note that African feminism needs to break the geographic boundaries and recognise the global movement of women and the transnational links African women have. Therefore, the research also contributes to cross-cultural feminist research on transnational families demonstrating how migrant women inhabit and navigate multiple transnational spaces. The study will answer the following questions,

1. What are the factors that have contributed to the women's reconstruction of their cultural identities?
2. How were their cultural identities experienced and their social relationships renegotiated in Britain?
3. What socio-cultural resources did they employ to reconstruct their cultural identities within the diaspora space?

Feminists also argue that the researcher's standpoint, i.e. academic standpoint, social positioning, identity and experience not only influence the research process, but also the questions that are asked and explored in the study (Hesse-Biber 2011; Rubin and Rubin 2005). Thus, as an African, Zimbabwean researcher studying other African Zimbabwean women, I wanted to ground the study on an epistemology and theory that highlights Zimbabwean women's differentiated experiences of gender and gender roles in contested transnational spaces. Thus, my position as a first-generation Zimbabwean woman living in

British society influenced the development of the research questions. This includes my personal experiences, such as going through an acrimonious divorce and the negative backlash and ostracism from the Zimbabwean women's faith group of which I was a member in England and from my family in Zimbabwe. I am a researcher who, while born, raised, and schooled in Zimbabwe has lived in the UK for more than 20 years. I am educated by the western Higher Education system that some African scholars identify as reinforcing the colonial or Western agenda. This creates for me something of a paradox and conflict.

I.1. 'New' African Diaspora

Diaspora is a contested term used as analytic concept in earlier academic literature to define fixed groups that were grounded in specific geographical locations and had a longing of a distant homeland (Brazier and Mannur, 2003; Cohen, 2008). Social constructionists and cultural theorists (Hall, 1990), Feminists (Anthias, 1998) argued that the use of the term was assimilationist, nationalist, unidirectional and homogenised whole groups of people (Brubaker, 2000; Cohen, 2008). Instead, scholars like Sheffer (1986: 3) define diaspora as 'ethnic minority groups of migrant origins residing and acting in host countries but maintaining strong sentimental and material links with their countries of origin – their homelands'. Hence, one of the significant changes to the notion of diaspora was the link that (im)migrants have with their homelands and application to other groups of people other than Jews (Cohen, 2008).

Critique of classical use of diaspora as a term to define a singular group led to use of the term to refer to African descendants in western countries. African diaspora as a concept

to researching individuals of African descendant emerged in the 1950s and 1960s (Patterson and Kelly, 2000; Shepperson, 1993). Okpewho, Boyce Davies, and Mazrui (2001) note that the use of the term in the disciplines of Sociology, Anthropology and History to theorise African people's experiences was within a discourse of colonialism and slavery. The research emphasised the Atlantic slavery, colonialism and focused on reconstructions of identities of Africans who were violently removed from their people, cultures, religions and way of life and forcibly settled in the Americas and Europe (Okpewho and Nzewu, 2003). These approaches homogenised and essentialised people from a vast continent with various cultures and histories (Brazier and Mannur, 2005; Cohen, 2008; Zeleza, 2005).

Conversely, the 'new' African diaspora are those who are displaced or voluntarily left their countries, and they have strong transnational links with their countries of origin (Okpewho and Nzewu, 2009). These transnational links help shape their identities and notions of belonging (Cohen, 2008). Based on this arguments, Zimbabweans living abroad are argued to constitute the new African diaspora (Pasura, 2012; 2014). According to the International Organisation of Migration (IOM, 2017), there are nine million Africans in Europe, compared to five and a half million in 2000. In Britain, Philip Hammond, (then Britain's foreign secretary) was quoted in the Telegraph (Steven Swinford, 9 Aug 2015) as saying, "millions of African migrants pose a threat to the standard of living and social structure of the UK and the rest of Europe." Such comments by politicians have fed into the negative political and social discourses on immigration, identity and belonging. These negative narratives on Africans and African migration also affect how they see themselves and how others view them (Kanneh, 1998). Chimamanda Ngozi, a feminist novelist, called it the 'single story of Africa'. She notes that a single story of Africa views them through a lens

of poverty, lack, and under- development. These narratives are part of the context within which African cultural identities are reconstructed and theorised in western countries (Hall, 1997; Kanneh 1998).

This type of rhetoric also assumes that an increasing number of Africans are destined for Europe, mainly the UK (see Collier, 2013). Suggested solutions for those perceived dilemmas, is to tighten immigration controls, as evidenced by the current Calais asylum seekers and refugee crisis in France (see De Haas, 2007). However, Zeleza (2005;2009) argues that African migrations are part of the wider process of complex global migrations. Engagement with these narratives and processes is important, especially to transnational diaspora who inhabit both spaces, their country of origin and country of settlement.

Flahaux and De Haas' (2016) comparative research on African migration disputes claims of millions of Africans settling in the UK, instead, they found that most of the African migration trends are differentiated by various factors including; socio-economic factors, education, regional and local economic and political factors. Hence, poor African migrants are mainly settling and working within regional countries and wealthy Africans are over-represented in international migration (see also Schoumaker, Flahaux, Schans, Beauchemin, Mazzucato and Sakho, 2015). They further note that within migration research, African migration is framed within a discourse of dislocation and displacement, with tribal conflicts cited as main reasons for the movement. The focus on dislocation and displacement as a reason for African migration ignores Africans who migrate and settle in other countries for education, work, and family reasons (Bakewell and Jonsson, 2011).

I.2. Feminisation of Zimbabwean Diaspora

One distinguishing feature of the new African diaspora is the extent to which migration has been 'feminised,' a result of technological advancements (travel, communications and employment opportunities) (Kane and Todd, 2013). Kane and Todd (2013) argue that earlier international migration of African women was as dependants of their male partners. Technological changes have enabled skilled migrant women from developing countries to settle and work in western countries (Delanty, Wodak, and Jones 2008; Kofman, 2013; Paul 2015). However, Uwakweh (2014) argues that there is limited research on first generation African women's challenges in the diaspora and the available research needs to move beyond just issues of race and gender in the diaspora to also focus on women's lives across transnational contexts. These transnational spaces define gender and socially locate women in different ways based on divergent historical and socio-cultural processes that impact on their lives. Hence, this study focuses on women's lives across transnational contexts.

The global increase in the number of Zimbabwean migrants has led to a proliferation of research, with a specific focus on the UK and South Africa (Chikanda and Crush, 2018). Areas of research have focused on these countries, as they have received the largest number of Zimbabweans. Some of the research on Zimbabwean diaspora in Britain that incorporate gender as a constitutive element includes: Zimbabwean women asylum seekers in the immigration system (Ranger 2005) negotiation of gender relations in Britain (Pasura 2008; 2012) transnational mothering and forced migration (Madziva and Zontini, 2012) and labour processes, gendered and sexual lives (Batisai 2016). This emerging literature is interdisciplinary and employs both quantitative and qualitative methods of

research. Nevertheless, I argue that the emerging literature does not specifically emphasise gender as a central category of analysis in Zimbabwean diaspora research. Crush and Tevera (2010; 16) highlights the issues by noting that:

.... little consideration has been paid to the gendering of the Zimbabwean diaspora experience which runs the risk of normalizing male experiences. The gendering of the Zimbabwean diaspora offers a lens through which to analyse men and women's migration experience in both the private and public spheres.

This 'feminisation' of Zimbabwean diaspora saw more women migrating and settling in Britain independent of male partners and relatives and being able to secure employment and enrol in higher education (Crush and Tevera, 2010). McGregor (2008) adds that during the political upheaval and economic crash of the 1990s to early 2000 Zimbabweans who settled in the UK were mainly from the middle class and upper-class families who could afford to travel abroad. In contrast, the women in the study came from different socio-economic backgrounds and were able to migrate through family connections, reunifications and as asylum seekers and refugees. The participant demographics in this study is supported by König and de Regt, (2010) who notes that extended family supports some Africans even though they may not be able to afford the travel themselves. However, since 2008, tightening of British immigration policies have resulted in Zimbabweans seeking refuge and settlement in other countries (Chikanda and Crush 2018). In the following section, I will outline the Thesis structure.

I.3. Outline of the Thesis

This Thesis is written in the first-person narrative with my own experiences of the research process included in the text. Collins (2003) argues that the insertion of her experiences and use of the first-person narrative embeds her in her research instead of distancing her from her work. Similarly, as a Zimbabwean-British woman who has also lived in Britain for twenty years, use of the first-person narrative and reflection on my experiences show shared experiences with some of the participants. I suggest that these shared experiences provide insight into some of their experiences. The Thesis is divided into eight chapters and the following sub-sections summarise the chapter contents.

Chapter 1: Conceptualisation of identity and belonging

In this chapter, I problematise the concepts of identity, culture and belonging. I provide definitions of the concepts to define the boundaries of their use in this study. Additionally, I also discuss the debates on the use of identity in Social Sciences and provide a justification for employing belonging in this study instead. The chapter is divided into two sections,

The first section, Identity in the African contexts, I highlight that identity is conceptualised within a complex, cultural contexts in African cultures. This is important to the challenges the women face in Britain and how they redefine their identities and belongings. I also problematise the concept of race and provide a definition for this study.

The second section, belonging: space and social positioning follows on by examining the limitations of the concept of identity in researching African identities. I provide a justification for the use of Belonging in the study and define the related concepts of space and social positioning.

Chapter 2: Zimbabwean Women's Cultural Identities and History of Migration.

In this chapter, I set the context for the study by examining the conceptualisation of cultural identities within the Zimbabwean context, linking it with the African feminist theoretical framework. An understanding of the history of Zimbabwe, including colonialism, liberation war and post-independent Zimbabwe is important to demonstrate how the participants' experiences of Zimbabwe, prior to settling in England is important as it informed their perceptions of the diaspora and challenges they faced in redefining their cultural identities and social relationships. The chapter is divided into three sections.

The first section; Colonisation and impact on gender and identities of Shona and Ndebele women from colonial times to post independence is an analysis of the impact of colonisation and the related racist and religious policies that controlled black Zimbabwean women's lives and redefined their identities and roles within the family and in the workplace. I recognise that cultural identities are contested and in continuous reconstruction, recognising the complexity of how gender, intersected with class, culture and other institutional power hierarchies in constructions of gender and gendered identities.

The second section, the trajectory of Zimbabwean women's movement from colonialism to current times, specifically focus on Zimbabwean women's migration patterns and how colonialism and other global factors have impacted upon and shaped that movement. I analyse how Zimbabwean women's movement was controlled by both the state and by male relatives who benefited from colonial policies.

The last section, Socio-demographic profile of Zimbabweans in the UK, I examine the Zimbabwean diaspora in Britain and seek to demonstrate why the Zimbabwean women diaspora migration and settlement in Britain in recent decades constitutes a 'feminisation' of the Zimbabwean diaspora.

Chapter 4: African Feminist Standpoint Theory.

To understand the participants' history and cultural influences on gender and identity, in this study, I employ an intersectional approach and African feminist Standpoint theory to examine the women's gendered lives in England. I employ African feminist standpoint theory because of its specific focus on the conceptualisation of gender and how gender intersects with culture, colonial history, and religion in defining women's identities. I employ's Goredema's (2010) definition of African feminism for this study as it captures the heterogeneity, multi-dimensional and complex identities, and experiences of African women. Although I employ African feminist Standpoint theory, I also borrow from western concepts, cultural hybridity to explicate the women's everyday experiences of gender, culture, identity, and power hierarchies in the women's lives.

Chapter 5: Methodological Considerations.

In this Thesis, I employed qualitative methods to answer the research questions. In this chapter, I will provide a rationale for employing qualitative research methods for exploring questions on gender and belonging in the diaspora. Additionally, I will discuss the research process, the challenges I faced during the process and their impact on interpretation and analysis of women's accounts. The Chapter is divided into three sections.

In the first section: Interpretive Phenomenology, experience, and feminist research, I analyse the methodological assumptions drawn from African feminist standpoint theory and Hermeneutic/ Interpretive Phenomenology underpinning the study. Phenomenology is the study of the life world or lived experience and these terms are central to Standpoint theory and African feminist scholarship (Lavery, 2003; Sloan and Bowe 2014). Phenomenological research aims to understand individuals' experiences of a phenomenon within particular contexts and the meanings they attribute to the phenomenon (Giorgi and Giorgi, 2009; Harding, 2004; 2008).

The second section: Methodology in action is a discussion of the research process including the ethical challenges I faced in the various stages of the research process, from the development of the research questions, participant recruitment and the interview process.

In keeping with African feminist arguments on the voice of the participants (Chilisa and Ntseane, 2010), themes were generated from participant narrations and their quotations used to support them. Additionally, I employ other research literature to support my findings. In this section, I will also discuss how the data was analysed, utilising

standard Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) and Palmer, et al. (2010) IPA eight step protocol. The last section: Positioning myself in relation to the study is a reflective analysis of my positioning and influence on the research process and analysis and interpretation of the participant accounts. Reflexivity and researcher positionality in the research process are crucial to feminist research (Collins, 1987; 1989; Hesse-Biber 2011).

Findings Chapters

After analysis four superordinate themes were identified, which are:

1. Musha mukadzi': Colonial, cultural, and religious influences on women's identities
2. Contested narratives of belonging and fragmentation of cultural identities.
3. Reconfiguring the family dynamics
4. Symbolic practises and markers of culture.

The findings are written thematically, and though the themes were written up separately, they were similarities between the group discussions and the individual interviews. For some aspects of the themes, the individual interviews provided details to the themes that were found in the group discussions.

Chapter 6: 'Musha Mukadzi': Colonial, Cultural, and Religious influences on Women's Identities

In this chapter, I address the question on which factors contribute to the women's reconstruction of cultural identities in the diasporic space. Migrants bring their cultural

beliefs, values and experiences to the diaspora, these experiences are a lens through which they engage interpret their experiences and relationships. The chapter is divided into two sections.

The first section, gendered identities and the typical African woman narrative is an exploration of the cultural scripts that the participants draw on the redefine their cultural identities.

The second section, production and reproduction of cultural beliefs and social norms explores the socio-cultural processes that have produced stereotypical gendered narratives that define the women.

Chapter 7: Contested Narratives of Belonging: Fragmented Cultural Identities

In this chapter, I explore how the women's lives have changed and the challenges to their cultural identities. I answer the research questions on how women's cultural identities are experienced, and their social relationships renegotiated in the diaspora. Immigration policies assign labels to immigrants that impact how (im)migrants are perceived by others within their groups and wider society. Additional to immigration labels, migrants are also ascribed racialised identities that locate them within power of social hierarchies. The chapter is divided into four sections,

The first section, Belonging and (un) belonging: tensions and conflicts, is an analysis of how immigration status, ascribed racialised identities, racism and discrimination shape

the women's perceptions of the diaspora and their embodiment in a multicultural, egalitarian and secular society.

In the second section, where is the woman? Gender and embodiment, I use a participant's quote, 'where is the woman', to specifically examine how the participants use their bodies to negotiate the entanglements of culture, 'westernisation', religion and reorient their bodies as African, black women in diasporic space.

In the third section, Religious spaces: gendered identities and control of women's bodies, I explore how religious spaces are used to reinforce gendered cultural expectations and control women's embodiment.

The section four, I examine the various ways that the participants employ online social groups (Facebook and WhatsApp) as sources for support, reinforcing their cultural identities and the contestations within them.

Chapter 8: Reconfiguring the Family Dynamics

In this chapter, I answer the research questions on how the women's cultural identities are reconstructed and how their social relationships are redefined. The family is not only the nuclear family but also includes kinships relationships, which play a significant role within the family. The chapter is divided into three sections,

The first section, gender relations: changing social positioning is an analysis of how gender relations, parenting and relationships with extended family become contested. The

contestation is a result of the participants' changing social positioning due to the increased economic opportunities and longer working hours.

The second section, kinship relationships across transnational spaces is an examination of the role of the extended family and how family relationships have been transformed and reconfigured across transnational spaces. I specifically focus on the renegotiation of mother in law and daughter in law relationships in the diaspora. An analysis of these relationships helps to expose the power dynamics between women. The power hierarchies between women due to their social position in the family is central to African feminist debates on power hierarchies not always being gendered.

The last section, Parenting- 'in-between' spaces, is an examination of how motherhood is transformed and renegotiated. Oyewumi (2004) claims that motherhood is tied to African women's cultural identities, therefore, I will examine how women with children negotiate their mothering roles and associated identities 'in between' cultures, drawing from Bhabha's (2004) concept of 'in-between' spaces.

Chapter 9: Symbolic Practises and Markers of Culture

In this chapter, I seek to answer the research question on the socio-cultural resources the participants employ in redefining their cultural identities and renegotiating their relationships in the 'in-between' spaces'. I specifically explore the use of language, food, music, social customs, and practises and how the women maintain their cultural identities and connections with Zimbabwe as 'home'.

Chapter10: Conclusion

In this chapter, I summarise the thesis, address the research questions supported by wider literature on African diaspora. I will also discuss how my study contributes to African diaspora and gender and migration scholarship, also noting the limitations of the study and potential future work.

Chapter 1

Conceptualisation of Identity and Belonging

In this study, I explore gendered cultural scripts that produce cultural identities and relations of power both within the private contexts, i.e. the family, also within the public spaces, i.e. between minority and the majority cultures, religious and online spaces. I begin the Thesis by problematising the concepts of identity and provide a scope for the study and use of belonging to explore the women's experiences. Although, individuals are born into already existing cultures, the premise of this study is that individuals are active agents who interact with others to produce and reproduce knowledge, create meanings that govern behaviour and help interpret the world (Hall, Battanni, Marshall and Neitz 2003; Magnusson and Marecek, 2012). An analysis of identity as a concept to research the Zimbabwean 's lives is important to contextualise definitions of gender, womanhood and identity within African feminist scholarship, upon which this study is premised on.

The chapter is made of two sections,

The first section, Identity within African contexts is an analysis of how identity is conceptualised in the diverse cultures, languages, and clans. I also examine the concept of culture and provide a working definition for the study. In this section, I draw on African feminists, e.g. Amina Mama's (2001a and 2001b), Oyewumi's (2003; 2011) arguments on gender and identity. I also draw on Dukor's (2010) arguments on African philosophies and their conceptualisation of identity.

The second section, belonging: space and social positioning is an examination of belonging as a useful analytic tool to explore the participants' lives whose identities are defined within communal relationships. Additionally, these identities are fragmented and redefined in transnational spaces that are contested. In this context, the concept of 'belonging' is connected to the concepts of 'space', 'social positionings' and 'location' (Anthias, 2013; 2016; Brah, 1996; Davis, Ghorashi, Smets and Eijberts, 2018; Silvey, 2006). I draw from African scholarship, Sociological and Feminist Geography to define and discuss these key concepts. Central to this chapter is Mama's (2001) argument that identity, as conceptualised by western academics, is inapplicable to African cultures.

1.1. Identity in the African contexts

In Africa, if I were to generalise and ask a person who he or she is and his name will be quickly followed by a qualifier, a communal term that will indicate ethnic or clan origins.'

(Mama, 2001: 63)

There is a myriad of definitions of cultural identity dependant on one's epistemological and theoretical framework. These debates have been formulated and reformulated depending on the social movements in different social and historical contexts (Benwell and Stokoe, 2006; Woodward, 2011). Notions of identity in the African context are conceptualised within communal relationships, divergent from western individualised conceptualisations of identity (Ndubuisi, 2013; Souleymane, Mama, Henning and Nyamnjoh, 2001). Mama (2001) further notes that the concept of identity cannot capture the complexity and multiplicity of identities in African cultures.

Hall (1997) in his seminal work on cultural identity and the diaspora argues that there are multiple definitions of cultural identity. Firstly, he suggests that cultural identity is defined within a shared culture that provides individuals with shared cultural scripts that define an individual. Cultural identities are shaped by common rules and behaviours, furthermore, individuals are born into already existing cultures that have a pre-constituted system handed down to them as part of their heritage. Thus, individuals are socialised into the group/ culture and oriented into roles that become a lens through which individuals interpret the world (See also Sarup, 1996; Simon, 2004; Woodward, 2011). Following on from Hall's definition, African feminists argue that African women's cultural identities are social, relational, gendered and an individual has an ontological relationship to others (Chilisa and Ntseane, 2010; Dukor, 2010; Yusuf, 2003).

Secondly, Hall defines cultural identity as one that is constructed within difference and is shaped by both the past and the present. In this instance, cultural identity is not fixed and unitary, instead, cultural identities are a process and are continuously being constructed and negotiated. Of significance are arguments by African scholars, on the implications of colonialism, racialisation, slavery on African people (including those in the diaspora)' sense of identity and belonging (Okpewho, Boyce Davis and Mazrui, 1999; Wane, 2011). Hence, it is important to note the impact of Zimbabwean history on the women's gendered identities and relationships to others. An analysis of their historical influences aid in understanding and answering the research questions. In the following chapter, I will provide the historical context and other socio-economic factors that have shaped Zimbabwean women's cultural identities across borders. Before I further discuss notions of identity and belonging in

African feminist scholarship, I will start by providing a definition of culture to frame this research.

Conceptualisation of culture

African feminists note the intertwining of gender and culture in African women's cultural identities. The definition of culture, however, in these contexts is presupposed. Wilson - Tagoe (2003), notes that in African research, culture is associated with nationhood and serve to create a notion of culture that is homogenous and fixed. Instead, cultures are expressed in gendered everyday practices that are also sites of contestations, tensions and continuously changing over time (Kuumba, 2006; Lewis, 2004).

In this study, the definition of culture is derived from Bhabha (1994), Benhabib (2002) and Hall (1997) who define culture as a social construct created through social interactions. Through the social interactions individuals create, beliefs, traditions and meanings which determine one's social practices, influences behaviour and a sense of identity and belonging (Benhabib, 2002; Bhabha, 1994;2015; Brah, 1996;Hall, 1992; 1997;Steady, 2005). Individuals are socialised into a culture and oriented into roles that become a lens through which they interpret the world. Quin, (2004) further notes the importance of how culture is produced, reproduced, and contested within relations of power and any research on culture and identity should be framed within these power relations. Departing from Quinn's argument, the study focuses on exploring the women's gender relations and power dynamics within, including their relationships to their mothers in law and sisters in law.

Further to the production of cultures through localised social interactions are also power relations created through global and historical influences. Stuart Hall's seminal text; *Cultural identity and diaspora* and Bhabha (1994)'s influential text; *Locating culture* (1994) have paved the way for a paradigm shift on how culture and identities are theorised in a globalised world. These scholars focused their work on issues of hybridity and difference. Bhabha (1987;1994; 2015) is concerned with the social production of culture within a context of colonisation, globalisation, and increased migration. He is interested in the processes and belongings produced between the majority and minority cultural differences. Contact between these cultures evolved into sites of struggle and reconstructions of cultural identities (Benhabib, 2002). Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2007) draws from Bhabha's (1994) arguments on cultural hybridity to argue that the colonial encounter between Zimbabweans and colonialists resulted in hybridised cultures in Zimbabwe. In this study, the findings show that the contact with other cultures in Britain fragmented the women's ascribed, gendered cultural identities. The women then find ways to reconstruct their identities and social relations.

Hybridity is a contested term, with some scholars arguing against its use due to its origins in Scientific racism and supremacist ideologies (Bhabha, 2015; Papastergiadis, 2015). Bhabha (2015) however, suggests that hybridity acts to reveal and help to understand the spaces that are created by cultural differences and how individuals navigate and reconstruct their cultural identities. Benhabib (2002; 2006) further adds that cultures are formed within these spaces and resultant binaries of cultural difference. In this study, I am exploring cultural identity reconstructions and negotiations of relationships within spaces of cultural difference, historical, social, and economic changes in the participants' lives.

Elements of culture that are important to this study include, language, food, music, beliefs, and values that were important to the participants and defined their cultural identities. I will further discuss language, other material markers of culture and how the participants employed it to maintain their heritage in chapter eight, where I answer the research question on the socio-cultural resources the participants employed to establish their cultural identities within contested transnational spaces. In the following, sub-section, I examine, notions of identity and critique of its use in Social Science research.

Identity

Similar debates on identity conceptualisation and its usefulness in understanding individual experiences are also prevalent within western feminist scholarship (Butler, 1999; Collins, 2000; Griffiths, 2003; Mirza, 2013; Yuval Davis, 2011). However, in Brubaker and Cooper's (2000) influential work, 'beyond identity', they argue that prevailing approaches to 'identity' as an analytic tool for Social Science research is often used in ambiguous ways and has lost its meaning. They argue that the concept is used in ways that attempt to encompass diverse levels of affinities, affiliations, and belongings. Feminists argue for an intersectional approach to researching and conceptualising identity that captures these diverse belongings. Black feminists like Collins (2000), Crenshaw (1989), Mirza (1997) and Yuval - Davis (2006;2011) and Bhavnani and Phoenix, (1994) argue against traditional approaches to cultural identity research that assumed that class, gender, and race are dynamics of identity which produce a coherent, unified identity. Instead, they argue that that race,

gender, and class intersect in how identity constructions and experiences of the social world and power hierarchies within. Further, Delanty et al. (2011) argue against the use of 'identity' in research on migration as it does not fully capture the complexity of gendered identity construction processes and migrants' navigation of transnational spaces.

Notions of race, gender and class are problematised, as their conceptualisations and theorisations differ across disciplines. I will discuss conceptualisations of gender in the theory chapter. It is established in academic scholarship that race as a biological factor does not exist. Instead, race is a social construct rooted in White supremacist ideologies (Black and Solomos, 2002; Smaje, 1997). However, it continues to shape the societies and experiences of those that are different. Brubaker and Cooper (2000) argue for other alternative concepts that capture the complexity and multiple ways that individuals construct their identities, attachment, affiliations, and the contestations within. Based on these arguments, I employ belonging as an analytic concept to explore the participants' (re)construction of cultural identities within contested transnational spaces. In the following section, I will further discuss belonging as an analytic tool for exploring the women's lives in Britain.

1.2. Belonging: Space and Social Positioning

Belonging is employed as a conceptual framework to demonstrate the participants' multiple, transnational, and fluid belongings and how they navigate their relationships. Thus, an individual can belong to more than one place, space, or group. In this study, issues of belonging embody elements that include, first, Zimbabwean historical influences on

culture and identity. Second, the social location and positioning of the participants within the various private and public spaces and explore the resources they use to negotiate these spaces (Anthias, 2011).

The concept of belonging challenges the idea of 'identity' as a concept to theorise on migration and identity (Brah, 1996; Bell, 2007; Butler, 1990; Hall, 2000). Jones and Krzyzanowski (2008: pg. 38), note that the concept of belonging gives a 'coherent, context-specific and sensitive theoretical model that supports empirical social research within the area of migration. Lahdesmaki, Saaresma, Hiltunen, Jantti, Saaskilahti, Vallius, Ahvenjarvi (2016) conducted a review of the use of belonging in contemporary Social Science research. They found that belonging is employed as a concept in relation to geographical, social, and temporal spaces that are shaped by migration, mobility, and displacement of people across transnational borders. The concept is argued to be inclusive of one's emotional attachments, feeling at home and the mechanisms of inclusions and exclusion that are produced (Anthias, 2001; Davis et al, 2018; Yuval -Davis, 2006; 2011). Anthias (2001) adds that one's sense of belonging is not only about cultural beliefs and practises but belonging is about subjective meaning an individual has for a group and the meaning a group has for its members. Hence, identity as belonging argues for a process of identity as 'being' and 'becoming.' (Hall, 1996; Ukpokolo, 2016).

The findings, this study show that the participants' cultural identities are gendered, ascribed, and based on gendered relationships with others. Additionally, there are tensions between being part of the collective and individual agency. Therefore, belonging is employed because it provides a concept that considers, the participants' relationships, spaces and social positionings and better elucidate their multiple transnational social

relationships. According to Jones and Kryzowski (2008: 44), belonging is a 'process whereby an individual in some ways feels some sense of association with a group and as such represents a way to explain relationships between a personalised identity and a collective one'. An individual's sense of belonging is constantly negotiated. Anthias (2002) and Davis, Kannabiran and Vietan (2006) argue that belonging and (un) belonging are not straight forward processes, instead, one's sense of belonging or (un)belonging can be contested and contradictory, as boundaries of belonging shift and change based on circumstances. Migrants then must negotiate different sets of social relations and cultural gender expectations that positions them in contradictory ways (Hall, 1994; Hall and De Gay, 1996; Anthias, 2009).

Tied to notions of belonging are space and social positioning. The Zimbabwean women inhabit numerous personal and social spaces that are contingent upon the intersection of gender, culture, immigration status and other factors.

Feminist scholars note the importance of space and time to researching gendered identities and experiences (McDowell, 1993; McDowell and Sharp, 2016; Massey, 1994). Space and place are areas of research that were predominant in Human and Feminist Geography (See, Hubbard, Bartley, Fuller, Kitchin, 2005; McDowell, 1993; Massey, 1999). Space is defined as both literal and or symbolic (Davis, Ghorashi, Smets and Eijberts, 2018). I will begin with an analysis of space and then discuss social positioning in relation to space.

Massey (1994) focuses on the conceptualisation of space and place as constituting social relations. These social relations are formed and shaped by gender, class, and other variations, which are also being defined within the spaces. She further asserts that if spatial

organisation of society is based on ever-changing relationships including global, national, and local then issues of fixed identity and space become challenging. Social relations within different spaces, position individual based on factors that include, gender, ethnicity, age, class, immigration status, etc. The different ways through which women are socially located result in contested spaces.

Positionality is a 'cultural concept relating to gender, ethnicity, culture...' (Franks, 2002: 43). Mbilinyi (1992: 50) argues that positionings are 'complex, multiple, inconsistent and often contradictory.' There are diverse kinds of positionalities (Franks, 2002). Ascribed Positionality is where one is ascribed a social position, e.g. based on gender. Selective positionality is where one chooses how they define themselves. Lastly, enforced positionality is where one's ethnicity or gender is forced upon oneself, even if one does not agree with the idea. These positionalities were evidenced within the women's lives and gendered experiences. Brah (1996) further develop the notion of space by notion of diasporic space in her research on mapping the social construction and experiences of South Asian diaspora in Britain. Diasporic space is one that is inhabited by both the migrants and those that are constructed as indigenous to Britain and the power hierarchies and processes that define the inhabitant of these spaces.

Overall, belonging is a useful concept to analyse the migrant women's experiences and social relations across transnational spaces that are defined by specific relations shaped by historical, cultural, and socio-economic factors. Space and Social positioning are concepts that central to this analysis. In the following chapter, I will examine how colonial history, Christianity and other post-colonial global factors have shaped Zimbabwean women's cultural identities.

Chapter 2

Zimbabwean Women's Cultural Identities and History of Migration.

In this chapter, I will examine how cultural identities in Zimbabwe were shaped and redefined from the colonial era to post-independence. Colonialism produced racial and class categorisation and racial segregation. The separation of races created rural areas separating black people by ethnicity and divided the white suburbs from the black townships. This chapter serves to contextualise the study of how gender, gender relations, ideas on production and reproduction and movement of women was a colonial construction, defined women's identities and continue to affect Zimbabwean women today, even in the diaspora. I focus on the Shona and Ndebele people, because most of the participants spoke Shona (including Manyika) and three participants spoke Ndebele.

Anthias (2012) notes that any research on migration needs to consider the contextual dynamics that connect migrants' cultural identities to other historical factors across local, global, and transnational levels. Hall (1992; 1997) further argues that cultural identities are constructed via the nexus of the past and the present. Therefore, to understand the women's reconstructions of their cultural identities, one must understand how their colonial history, cultures, and other social factors have shaped their gendered identities. Discussions on culture, gender are discussed in the following chapter on African feminist Standpoint theory. All the participants were educated in the first decade of the Zimbabwean nation, had experiences of independence, and the political, economic, and

social changes that followed. In this study, the findings show that the women's cultural identities were gendered, ascribed identities that were shaped by their history, cultures, and religious beliefs. Furthermore, experiences in the diaspora challenged these gendered cultural identities and accounts of their experiences were formulated through a dichotomy between African and western beliefs and values that essentialised their identities. I argue that these dichotomies that situate gendered cultural identities within African traditions against westernisation are a remnant of colonial times, reinforced and reproduced through African religious practises and the family institution. I also recognise the influences of post-independence nationalist discourse, African Christian beliefs, global economic and capitalist forces on the women's lives.

This chapter is broken into three sections.

The first section: Colonisation and impact on cultural identities of Shona and Ndebele women from the colonial era to post -independence, focuses on the impact of colonial capitalist ideologies and Christian beliefs on Shona and Ndebele people's family configuration, division of labour, redefining of cultural identities and social relationships. The scope of the section will be limited to influences of the general practises and legislation on black Zimbabwean cultural identities.

The second section: The trajectory of Zimbabwean women's migrations from colonialism to current times, focuses on Zimbabwean women's internal, regional, and international migration and the role of gendered policies on women's movement. I will provide a trajectory of Zimbabwean women's movement from colonial era to early 2000.

This was an era that saw an unprecedented number of black Zimbabwean women leaving the country for western countries, leading to a feminisation of Zimbabwean diaspora.

The third section: The socio-demographic profile of Zimbabweans in the UK is an examination of the Zimbabwean diaspora in Britain, their characteristics, and experiences, with a specific focus on women.

2.1. Colonisation and Impact on Cultural Identities of Shona and Ndebele women from the colonial era to Post -independence.

In this section, I analyse how colonisation and related racist policies contributed to the redefining of gender and gendered identities amongst the Shona and Ndebele people in Zimbabwe. I will not explore colonisation of Zimbabwe and all the processes and treaties involved. Instead, for the purposes of this study, I will examine how colonial policies on racial segregation, division of labour and movement of women shaped women's gendered identities. These occurrences eliminated the avenues that enabled women to have a voice and power within families and communally (Fidan and Bui, 2015; Kuumba, 2006). I will also examine, how both colonial Christian missionaries and African independent churches were complicit in the subjugation of Zimbabwean people and the creation and reinforcement of power hierarchies between men and women, which transformed gender conceptualisation and gender relations. In this study, the family is defined as constitutive of the nuclear family, the kinships relationships and the socio-cultural rules that govern these relationships (Cobbah, 1987;Chiwome,1994). Through the family, gender, gender roles and identity were transformed from pre-colonial times to current times of globalisation and transnationality.

Within this wider context, I will demonstrate why the Zimbabwean women diaspora's migration and settlement in Britain constitutes 'feminisation' of Zimbabwean diaspora and needs a specific focus.

Zimbabwe has a population of about twelve million people with diverse languages and ethnicities (Zvobgo, 2009). Mlambo (2014) argues that Zimbabwe does not have a homogenous culture, instead, the country is an amalgamation of diverse ethnic groups and languages that were brought together by the colonisers into an 'imagined country', now called Zimbabwe. Thodlana (2014) concurs by noting that the use of a singular Zimbabwean culture assumes homogenous cultural identities that do not exist (Mawere, 2014; Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2009). Instead, ethnic groups are identified by various complex criteria, including geographical areas in which they live, rural areas they come from, totems, and languages they speak. Participants in this study also identified themselves in these various ways and the findings in the study demonstrate how some of these aspects of cultural identities become salient in discussions on identity in the diaspora space. Jeater (1993) in her research on the impact of colonisation of black Zimbabweans, using residents of Gweru as an example, further argues that an exploration of gendered identities must avoid grand narratives of colonisation, and instead employ an intersectional approach that recognises the complexity of how gender, intersected with class, culture and other institutional power hierarchies in constructions of gender and gendered identities. Hence, in this study, I employed an intersectional approach to demonstrate the complex relationships the women have with their cultures and the social processes that defined their identities.

Colonial rule created racial power struggles that were manifested through contestations between traditional customs and 'western' ideologies. The colonial

encounter in Zimbabwe was not one of a passive nation colonised and oppressed by the British. Instead, the colonial encounter was one of negotiation, resistance, and compromise (Jeater, 1993; Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2007; 2008; Raftopoulos, and Mlambo, 2008). It is at this juncture of contestations that created new forms of cultural identities (Mlambo, 2008; Ndlovu, F. 2008). In pre-colonial times, Zimbabwean women had more egalitarian relationships with men and could own land (Goredema, 2010; Schmidt, 1992). At that time, the family was central to the work and means of production.

Oyewumi (2004) argues that colonialism introduced European enlightenment and 'modernity' to African cultures, with the purpose of erasing their cultural identities, African philosophies and engendering an all-encompassing western paradigm of knowledge production (see also Namisiko and Kisiang'ani, 2004). The colonisers gained economic control, enforcing new cultural hegemonies based on heteronormative discourses (Horn, 2005; Oheneba- Sakyi and Takyi, 2006; Schimdt, 1992). Additionally, the colonisers are argued to have colluded with Zimbabwean patriarchy in controlling and redefining women's roles and participation in public spaces.

Although, motherhood was always important to African cultures and women's identities, after colonisation women's value became more bounded with reproduction than production (Burton, 1991; Horn, 2005; Mama, 1997; Norwood, 2013; Tripp et al. 2009; West, 2002). Horn (2005) argues that the ideology of domesticity was an attempt to maintain a heterosexual cultural order and reinforce a state that was divided along the private and public spaces for black Africans. The separation of domestic and public space and the contestations between the two was a main theme in this study, when examining the reconfiguration of the family institution and gender relations (see chapter, eight. I am aware

of the contestations and critique from some African scholars on the use of private/ public participation, male/ female and rural/urban dichotomies (Allman, Geiger, and Musisi 2002). Allman et al. (2002) suggest that the dichotomies limit one's scope of women's lives and participation during colonialism, furthermore, the use of these dichotomies essentialises African women's identities and roles. Therefore, in this chapter, though I focus on the impact of colonisation on gender and gender relations, I recognise that the women's roles and boundaries of participation were not fixed, and the women were not passive recipients.

Colonialists stripped black Zimbabweans of their land and source of production and introduced a capitalist system, with waged labour and taxes. which transformed family relations and social position of women. The new domestic structures also helped shape the capitalist system that was emerging (Cheater and Gaidzanwa, 1996; Moyo and Kawewe, 2002; Schimdt, 1992). Increased Agricultural and mining production began to change the population demographics of the country, increasing the number of labour migrants from across Africa, including Malawi, Mozambique and South Africa (Raftopoulos and Mlambo 2008; Mlambo, 2010; 2014). This is important to note because one of the participants in the study shared the story of her family migrating to Zimbabwe from Malawi for employment and later settling in the country. The family migration and settlement in Zimbabwe and the citizenship policies that followed after independence impact her sense of belonging and claim to a national identity.

Simultaneously, racial segregation, and industrialisation led to the creation of rural areas, suburbs and 'locations' where legislation was enacted to control black Africans' movement to the urban areas and suburbs (Mlambo, 2010). The separation of men from their families, created new family configurations with men creating new relationships of

cohabitation in the cities, while being separated from their families and kinships in the rural areas (Essof, 2013; West, 2002). State laws did not allow the men to have their wives, partners or families in the cities and this was discouraged through provision of living quarters designed for single men only (Moyo and Kawewe, 2002; Mlambo, 2014).

Racial segregation, and control of movement created separate gendered geographical spaces for whites and for blacks. The urban environment produced new forms of gendered identities and configurations of relations and it was in the rural areas, where these gendered identities were contested (Jeater, 1993). The women's positioning in the family also translated into other areas of public life. These new family configurations still exist in Zimbabwe today, as there are families that still live in the rural areas and have family in the cities and the notion of the men being the breadwinner is still prevalent in some families as well. Additionally, these 'reserves' have become incorporated into Zimbabweans' history and lineage, as part of family history. This was evident in the interviews, when I asked the participants, where they came from in Zimbabwe, and they would ask if I meant where they grew up or where they came from, in the rural areas. I will discuss these influences further, later in the chapter, when I analyse the trajectory of women's movement from colonial times to contemporary feminisation of Zimbabwean migration.

Capitalism, division of labour and racist policies also created class divisions between the educated Zimbabweans, who worked in more professional jobs, and those who were in menial jobs and in the rural areas (Barnes 1992; West, 2002). In this study social class encompasses an individual's social status based on socioeconomic resources, education, and occupation (Skeggs, 1997). After independence, the notion of class further transformed the black Zimbabwean family institution as families became more nuclear and the elite could

employ domestic helpers to help in the family, thus forging new social and cultural practises. The nuclear family thus became the institution for physical, cultural, and social reproduction and a transformation from 'African tradition' to embracing modernity (Gaidzanwa, 1996; West, 2002). In this study, a comparison of the participants' lives in Zimbabwe and the diaspora, showed that family support and domestic helpers in Zimbabwe were central to how some of the participants balanced work, and their cultural gendered expectations as wives and mothers. Additionally, social class informed the socio-cultural resources that participants employed to strengthen their cultural identities in the diaspora.

Colonialism further enforced these new gendered relations, through Christianity which enforced the ideology of domesticity and used it to differentiate gendered spaces (Gaidzanwa, 1996; West, 2002). A review of literature indicates that different western Christian movements have significantly impacted diverse ethnic groups in Zimbabweans over the years (Welch 2000; Zvogbo, 1996). Overall, Christian missionaries and their wives created women's groups and home craft groups, where Zimbabwean women were taught to be good wives and mothers, leaving waged labour and production to men (West, 2002). The purpose of the groups was to promote the ideology of domesticity and to reinforce the message of a 'real' or Zimbabwean woman as one who 'is a woman who is heterosexual, married, bears children, and more-often-than-not, pleases her husband sexually' (Horn, 2005: 4). However, Martin - Shaw (2015) argues that the women used these homecraft groups to their advantage, as the groups provided women with opportunities to socially organise themselves, educate and support each other. I also recognise that transnationally, African Pentecostalism have also played a significant role in the reproduction of gender power hierarchies, the reconfiguring of the family and women's public participation (Pasura

2012; West, 2002). The Zimbabwean people resisted some of the teachings of the westerners that misaligned with their traditional beliefs and developed their own African Christian churches and groups that recognised their traditions and African philosophies.

The formation of such groups and their role was also found in this study, where some participants were members of religious groups that continue to exert an influence in Britain. Additionally, two of the focus group interviews were with Pentecostal Zimbabwean women Christian groups (Ruwadzano) and discussions with one of the groups was on how to be good wives and mothers, illustrating how pervasive gendered cultural expectations are in reconstructions of cultural identities in the diaspora. Adogame and Spickard (2010) further argue that African people were caught between the tensions of the western religion's ideologies, imperial control, their own African beliefs and power hierarchies, and resistance to domination, which contributed to the redefining of their cultural identities. When Zimbabwe achieved its independence from colonial rule in 1980, the Zimbabwean government sought to change legislations that had previously been oppressive to black Zimbabweans. One of these was the Legal Age of Maturity (1982), which will be discussed further in the next section.

In conclusion, I have demonstrated the various ways in which colonial rule transformed Zimbabwean people's lives and redefined their cultural identities. Racial segregation resulted in new gender and class identities, which have shaped contemporary Zimbabwe, gender relations and the participants in this study. In the following section, I continue to examine colonial influences on women's lives, specifically focusing on colonial policies that controlled women's movement and how over the years, political and economic changes have enabled more women to migrate and settle in other countries on their own.

2.2. The Trajectory of Zimbabwean Women's Migrations from Colonialism to Current times

To understand the current events that led to feminisation of Zimbabwean migration, one needs to understand the history of women's movements. Issues of mobility, space and belonging are gendered and further influenced by race, class, and age (Cheater and Gaidzanwa, 1996). This is because from the colonial era, the state employed gender, race, class, and age to control the means of production and restrict and control Black Zimbabweans' movement (Moyo and Kawewe 2002). In this section, I will firstly examine the conditions under which women migration was curtailed through colonial legislation and the impact of the legislation on women's migrations and cultural identities in Zimbabwe. Secondly, I examine the effects of the economic decline and political violence in Zimbabwe, which saw millions of Zimbabweans leaving the country to seek refuge in other countries, both regionally and internationally.

African scholars note the lack of gender breakdown of the history of Zimbabwean migration, as labour migrations were mainly male migration. Crush (2010) further adds that without reliable previous data on female migration, it is challenging to accurately assess the trajectory of Zimbabwean female migration in absolute terms. Nevertheless, there is a recognition of the impact of the colonial capitalist system and gendered cultural beliefs on women's movement and ability to participate in public spaces. During the colonial era, women suffered disproportionately from colonial rule and control of movement (McFadden,

2000). Mlambo (2010;2014), a Zimbabwean historian who has charted Zimbabwean migration history, notes that population migration and emigration, both regionally and internally, are a central feature of Zimbabwean history.

History shows that Zimbabwean women did migrate to other countries outside of the continent for education including during the liberation struggle (Mlambo, 2014). What is different is the low numbers of women who migrated and settled in other countries from the colonial era through to the early years after independence. Control measures included the authorities' use of registration and pass system to control African residence and mobility. The pass system was used to control their movement and gave permission for black people to be in white spaces only for work. Additionally, single females were treated as legal minors who could not access urban housing except through marriage (Essof,2002; Moyo and Kawewe; 2013;Mlambo, 2014; Raftopoulos, and Mlambo, 2008).The pass system affected women and men differently; Barnes (1992) notes that men's movement was through the pass system only, yet, women's movement was controlled through institutional law as dependants for life. Thus, not only was women's movement controlled by the state, it was also reinforced through control by male members of the family. These laws have shaped Zimbabwean women's ability to migrate and settle in other countries in their own right. Other ways through which women's movement was controlled was through urban policies that forbade women from working in the urban labour market, except as nannies (Barnes, 1992; Gaidzanwa, 1996). Consequently, public participation was predominantly for men and the private space was for women. Restricted access to employment left women dependant on the men and undermined their positionings within the family.

An understanding of the result of these policies is important to this study, because it demonstrates how the binary between domesticity and women's participation in the workplace, underpins the tensions that some participants felt about balancing work, family and conformity to gendered cultural expectations. The control of women's movement, limited participation in public spaces and relegation of women to the rural areas, is also argued to have resulted in the stereotyping of African women as rural subsistent farmers only (Allman et al, 2002). The stereotyping of women in the rural areas was also found in the participants' accounts in this study. Some participants used this stereotypical 'rural woman' who has not been tainted by westernisation as an example of a true Zimbabwean woman. However, Allman et al. (2002) argue that women in the rural areas were multifaceted and should not be understood only through their labour. Some participants in the study narrated their experiences in Zimbabwe of visiting their families in the rural areas and being exposed to music and lifestyle that they now listen to and reinforces their cultural identities and connection with Zimbabwe.

Although it was illegal for women to be in urban spaces, except as domestic workers, women did find ways of resisting these limitations and occupying 'white' spaces. The latter period of the colonial era, saw more women leaving the rural areas, moving to the cities to seek employment and to join their husbands (Hungwe, 2006). Women saw the cities as places of freedom from restrictive families and away from the hard work of tending the land. Yet some men disapproved of the women's migration to the cities as they saw it as women resisting the social order and abandoning their family duties and responsibilities (Barnes, 1997; Hungwe, 2006).

The control of women's movement also created notions of 'respectability' and (un)respectability among women. Single women who migrated to the city and lived with men without any payment of bride price (*kubika mapoto*) were frowned upon and considered unrespectable, which served to further reinforce control of women's movement (Hungwe 2006). These notions of respectability and (un)respectability also shaped the women's narrations, as some participants criticised other Zimbabwean women in the diaspora for abandoning their cultural values and abusing the independence they enjoyed in Britain. Furthermore, some participants felt that the diaspora was a place of freedom far away from family control and social judgements.

After Zimbabwean independence in 1980, amongst other economic and political changes, there was a commitment by the government to repel discriminatory colonial policies that discriminated against black people (Essof, 2013; Mlambo, 2014). Furthermore, Zimbabwean feminists also challenged the government to specifically focus on women's rights to allow girls and women equal access to education, employment, and ownership of land in their own right (Essof 2013). More importantly, the legal age of majority Act (1982) provided all Zimbabweans, including women, adult status at the age of eighteen. However, women still needed permission from their parents and guardians to get married (Martin-Shaw, 2015). The Act transformed women's movement from being forbidden to occupy certain spaces to having opportunities to be part of the labour market, both within the country and regionally. This also meant that women could travel independently, even for short periods of time (See Hungwe, 2006; Kesby, 1999; Made and Mpofu, 2005). Although, there were policy changes to women's participation in public spaces, some of the gendered

narratives on women's movement and confinement to domestic spaces has shaped gender conceptualisation and gendered relationships in the participants' lives today.

The migration of Zimbabwean women has significantly changed since the early 1990s to early 2000s, because of the decline in the economy, a rise in political violence and social disintegration (Essof, 2013). Furthermore, in the late 1990s, mass food protests and the Land Reform and Resettlement Programme II (LRRP II) saw thousands of people killed and tortured. Consequently, a mass exodus of black Zimbabweans and white farmers left the country to seek employment, education and refuge in Britain and other countries of the west leading to what is defined by McGregor (2008) as the 'new Zimbabwe diaspora communities' and a feminisation of the Zimbabwe diaspora (Crush, 2010).

Table 1; Phases of Zimbabwean international migration, below is a summary of the different international Migration phases of Zimbabweans over the years, which has been adapted from Pasura (2006) mapping exercise for International Organization for Migration (IOM). These phases of Zimbabwean migration and displacement demonstrate the complexity of Zimbabwean migration and the diverse reasons for migration and settlement. Various national phases in Zimbabwean history has seen different migration patterns for various ethnic/racial groups. These phases include the war of black liberation, which saw a lot of White Zimbabweans leaving the country for fear of persecution. The Matabeleland massacres (called Gukurahundi in Zimbabwe) saw Ndebele people leaving the country and settling mainly in South Africa and abroad (Table 1). Before the late 1990s, it was white Zimbabweans and black Zimbabweans from middle-class families with the social networks and capital to move countries, who were migrating and settling in other countries.

Table 1. Phases of Zimbabwean international migration

| Period | Nature of migrants | Appropriate no of migrants | Destinations |
|--|---|----------------------------|---|
| Liberation Struggle 1960-1979 | The Migration of political exiles. Labour migrants to SA | 210000 75 000 | Other southern countries and Britain |
| Liberation struggle 1972-1989 | Flight of white Zimbabweans | 142 000 | Britain, South Africa, Australia, New Zealand, Canada |
| Gukurahundi ¹ 1982-1987 | Ndebele migration | 5000+ | Botswana, South Africa, and Britain |
| Economic decline and political violence 1990-1998 | Migration of skilled professionals | 2000,000 | South Africa, Botswana, Britain, USA, and Australia |

¹ A series of massacres of Ndebele civilians carried out by the Zimbabwe National Army from early 1983 to late 1987 (Ndlovu- Gatsheni, 2012).

| | | | |
|--|------------------|------------|--|
| Continued economic decline/ Land acquisition 1999-present | The great exodus | 3-4million | Other African countries, Britain, Australia, united states, Canada, New Zealand |
|--|------------------|------------|--|

Source: Adapted from Pasura (2006) mapping exercise for IOM.

Mlambo (2010) however, notes that recent migration patterns differ from the previous migration patterns in Table 1. These differences include, firstly, the increased volume of Zimbabweans leaving the country because of economic hardships, political violence, and social disintegration. Secondly, where previous migrations were labour migrants within the African region, current migrations include a growing number of Zimbabwean professionals and highly educated Zimbabweans leaving the country to seek employment in other countries. Lastly, Mlambo (2010) notes that recent migrations have seen a growing number of women migrants taking up opportunities internationally (see also Crush 2010). In the following section, I will specifically discuss the migration of Zimbabweans to the UK, gender breakdowns and their demographic structure.

2.3. Socio-demographic Profile of Zimbabweans in the UK

In this section, I provide an overview of the Zimbabwean diaspora in Britain, their characteristics, and experiences, including a specific focus on Zimbabwean women. Although, migration of family members is not new to Zimbabwean experiences, as evidenced by regional informal trade practises by Zimbabwean women from the 1970s

(Moyo and Kawewe 2002). What is new is the international mass movement and increased separation between nuclear families and the wider family connections in recent years. The Zimbabwean diaspora in the UK is made up of diverse 'races' and ethnicities, from diverse backgrounds who migrated to the UK through different means. However, this section will focus on black Zimbabweans in Britain, their characteristics, and experiences.

Globally, the number of Zimbabweans settling in other countries has increased over the years (Chikanda and Crush, 2018). Data from the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (2013) and World Bank (2016) shows that the population of Zimbabweans worldwide has grown from an estimated 263,085 in 1990 to 973,200 in 2013, an increase of over 300% in just over two decades. In the Zimbabwean women constitute almost half of the Zimbabwean diaspora communities, who left the country and settled in the UK. This led to what Crush and Tevera (2010) called the 'feminisation' of Zimbabwean migration. This international migration of Zimbabwean women as independent individuals is occurring within a context of a history of colonial and social control of women's movement. The increase in migration of Zimbabweans to Britain from the early 1990s to 2000 is suggested to be because of the historical relationship between the two countries that enabled black Zimbabweans to be proficient in English and gain high levels of education that were based on the British system. These factors are argued to have enabled Zimbabwean diaspora to integrate into British society (Crush and Tevera 2010; McGregor and Primorac 2010; Zembe, 2018). Mitton and Aspinall (2011) conducted an audit on integration levels of first and second-generation black Africans including Zimbabweans living in the UK, using government social surveys and administrative data. They found that there was a high level of education among Zimbabweans in the UK and low unemployment, especially among

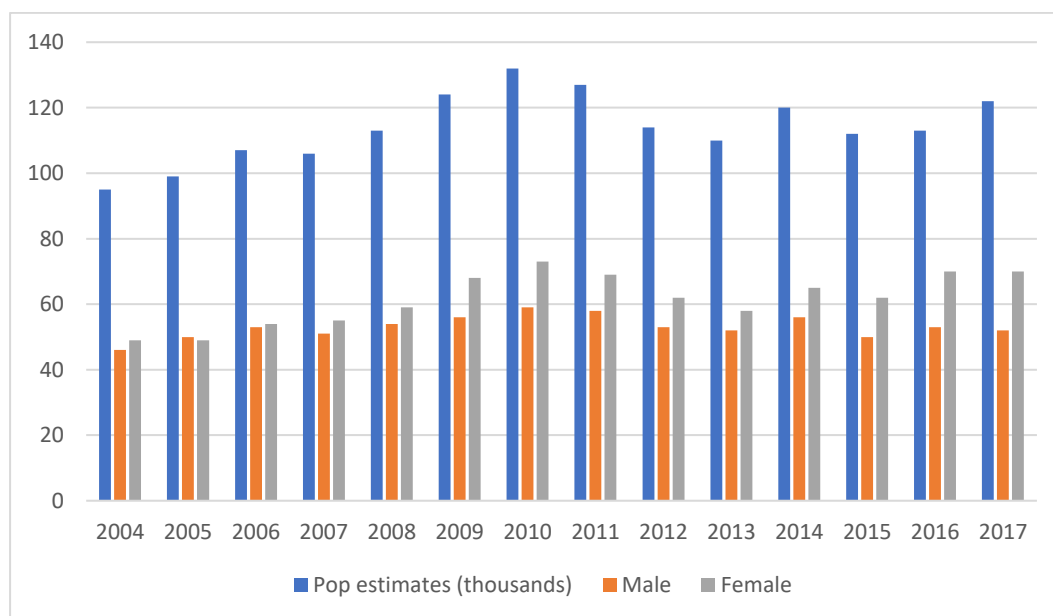
women who were found to be working in health and social care sectors. Furthermore, unlike, other Black Africans, Zimbabweans were geographically dispersed across England and most of the Zimbabwean population is concentrated in major cities, including London, Slough, Luton, Leeds, Leicester, Manchester, Birmingham and Coventry because these areas provide more employment opportunities (Bloch, 2005; McGregor, 2008; 2010; Pasura, 2008, 2014). They further note that the ability of the Zimbabwean and other African diaspora to integrate into British society resulted in limited attention being paid to their experiences due to the perceived notion that they pose little challenge for social policy and integration.

For purposes of this study, I used the Office of National Statistics data to show the current gendered breakdown of the Zimbabwean diaspora in the UK and explain what the data suggests in relation to other research on Zimbabweans in Britain. **Graph² 1** below shows the gender breakdown of Zimbabwean diaspora in the UK from 2004 to 2017.

² The Office of National Statistics, (ONS) International Migration Statistics used Annual Population Survey (APS) and the Labour Force Survey (LFS) for the data. All data sets were individually rounded off to the nearest thousand

Graph 1

Overseas-born Zimbabweans in the UK, excluding residents in communal establishments, by sex, by country of birth.



Produced from Office of National Statistics (ONS) data:

www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandmigration

The graph shows that the total population of the Zimbabwean diaspora in the UK has fluctuated over the years. The population of women diaspora over the last thirteen years is consistently higher than men. I suggest that the increase in the number of Zimbabwean women diaspora in Britain is a result of the employment opportunities available to the women. For example, the increased number of people living longer, in Britain and the state changes to how social care is delivered created employment opportunities for Zimbabwean women migrants and targeted recruitment by the National Health Service (NHS) and other agencies. Increased opportunities in this care sector meant that more Zimbabwean women could work in various capacities (Chikanda, 2006; McGregor, 2007). Additionally, the government was also giving bursaries for migrants to train as nurses and social workers with

guaranteed work permits (Chikanda, 2005; Humphries, 2010). Though data shows an increase in Zimbabwean women migrants in Britain, it is important to note that there are challenges to accounting for the population statistics of African migration. Flahaux and De Haas (2016) argue that data collection on international African migration is difficult due to the number of undocumented migrants, which makes it challenging to track their movements. This is supported by the International Organisation for Migration (IOM), which suggest that the number of Zimbabweans in the UK exceeds the official figures because of many undocumented migrants and failed asylum seekers. Additionally, collection of accurate data is impinged by different definitions of migration and assessment criteria with each country, making comparisons challenging (Castles, Haas, and Miller 2014).

The number of Zimbabwean women migrants and their dispersal across Britain has also been shaped by immigration policies. The women in the study migrated to the country through various routes. Those who had the right to reside and work in the country had at some point been employed in the health and a social care sector or heard about the opportunities for employment in the health and social care sector. Other participants in the study came as asylum seekers and gained their right to live and work in the country, yet others were still awaiting a decision years after their application. The UK government introduced immigration policies to curtail the increased migration to the UK after World War II and the end of colonialism. The 1971 Immigration Act³ was enacted to limit immigration and increase integration. The continuous reform of the UK immigration and

³ The Immigration Act is the foundation of current UK immigration legislation which differentiates between the rights of UK born or those with a British passport, EU nationals and migrants from other countries, including former British colonies.

asylum system by subsequent governments has tightened immigration policies. Part of the reform was control of asylum seekers and refugees in the country. The concern over the increased number of asylum seekers in the UK resulted in new legislation that allowed detention of asylum seekers and reduced benefits entitlement. These restrictive laws have had a significant impact on the number of new arrivals from Zimbabweans seeking asylum. In 2008, there were 9,637 refugees and no asylum seekers from Zimbabwe. This number reduced to 8,760 refugees and 361 pending cases (UNHCR population statistics 2016). McGregor (2010), further notes that between 2000- 2008, Zimbabweans were at the top of the list of asylum seekers in Britain. Kane and Todd (2013) suggest that specific to asylum seekers and refugees; there is a lack of accurate gender disaggregated statistics and available data is not comprehensive. The dispersal of asylum seekers policy across the country has also contributed to the settlement on Zimbabwean diaspora in other areas outside the cities (Chiumbu and Musemwa, 2012; Wintour, 2009). The dispersal of Zimbabweans across the country also has methodological challenges for research (Mitton, and Aspinall 2011). This has been true for this research study, where there were challenges in the recruitment of participants from one specific region. Consequently, participants were recruited from the cities, including, London, Manchester, Wolverhampton, Sheffield, Reading, Coventry and Birmingham.

2.4. Conclusion

In this chapter, I have provided a context for the study by examining the historical trajectory of the Zimbabwean women, from colonial influences to post independence Zimbabwe.

Colonialism created racial and class categorisation that separated black people by ethnicity and divided the suburbs from the townships. Additionally, they introduced policies that controlled women's movement and participation in public spaces. After colonisation women's value became more bounded with reproduction than production. After Zimbabwean independence, global influences, political violence, and economic decline have shaped Zimbabwean women gendered cultural identities and defined the trajectory of their migration and settlement in other countries. In the following chapter, I discuss African feminist standpoint theory underpinning the study.

Chapter 3

African feminist Standpoint Theory

In this chapter, African Feminism as a standpoint theory and Black feminist intersectional approaches (Crenshaw, 1989; Collins, 1986; Reynolds, 2002) are utilised to examine and theorise how gender intersects with race, culture, and socioeconomic factors in Zimbabwean women's reconstruction of their cultural identities in England. Additionally, I examine how the 'other' socially position them based on these labels and how the women employ available socio-cultural resources to socially position themselves, as Zimbabwean women and create a sense of belonging in contested private and public spaces. My reasons for utilising African feminism as standpoint theory and intersectionality draw specifically from Harding (1994; 2004; 2008), Haraway (1991;2004), and Collins (2000) arguments on situated knowledge production of marginalised women and how race, culture and other institutional factors, intersect in their experiences of gender inequality and power hierarchies.

Earlier migration studies within the Social Sciences were focused on male migrant experiences, leading feminists scholars to challenge this dominant focus on men's experiences and ignoring the centrality of gender to diaspora experiences (Kofman, 2013;Kofman, Phizacklea, Raghuram and Sales, 2000; Lutz 2010;Pedraza, 1991).

Assimilationist and acculturation theories were employed to explain diaspora experiences with assumptions that migrants discarded their cultural identities and assimilated into the local norms of the country of settlement (Shuval, 2000). Black feminists further challenged the lack of black women's experiences in gender and migration studies (Collins 1989, 1997;

Hooks 2000; Yuval Davis, 2010). Instead, they argued that gender intersects with race and class in multiple ways in black women experiences of migration and reconstruction of identities. These arguments led to a significant shift in gendered migration studies with an increased focus on intersectional approaches (See; Anthias, 2012; Bastia, 2014; Chow, Texler Segal, and Tan, 2011; Heyes, 2010).

Specific to researching African women, Ndlovu (2016) suggests that the use of western approaches to researching their lives results in the marginalisation of other epistemologies and theories, especially the ones from developing countries. Additionally, Kisiang'ani (2004) argues that Eurocentric theoretical approaches were uncritical of the conceptualisations of gender and womanhood and its applicability to African women's cultural contexts. Additional to the failure to consider cultural, Rodriguez, Tsikata, Adomako- Ampofo (2015) further add that the research ignores the transnationality of African women diaspora, as it privileges the country of settlement over the country of origin. Based on these arguments, African feminism standpoint theory is employed in the study for two related reasons:

1. It provides a lens through which we can deconstruct the gendered social constructions of transnational spaces that shape the participants' sense of belonging and social relationships.
2. This is a study about African women in the diaspora, whose experiences of Zimbabwe and diaspora are underpinned by their gender intersecting with race, culture, immigration policies entangled within a colonial history. Hence, the women experience the diaspora from a specific standpoint.

The chapter is divided into four sections.

In the first section, Feminism and Standpoint theory, I provide a general analysis of Feminism and focus on Standpoint as a theory and methodology for knowledge production. I acknowledge that Standpoint as a unitary theory has been challenged by other feminists and there is a recognition of a multiplicity of, sometimes contradictory, standpoints (Alcoff and Potter, 1983; Ramazanoglu and Holland 2002; Sprague, 2016). Therefore, I argue for African feminism as a standpoint theory to highlight specific epistemological assumptions on gender, gender relations and hierarchies of power. Naidu's (2010) work on South African dancers and domestic workers and their experiences under the gaze of the white other also informs my arguments on the use of African feminist standpoint theory.

Following on, I specifically discuss Black feminism and intersectionality to frame the debates on black women's experiences within a western context. I recognise that the participants inhabit multiple standpoints and in various transnational contested spaces of marriage, social relationships, religious groups, and workspaces.

In the second section, African Feminism, I define African feminism and discuss related debates on conceptualisation of gender, gender relations and power hierarchies. One of the key arguments of African feminism is how the conceptualisation of gender is intertwined with culture and colonial influences (Oyewumi, 1997; 2004). Therefore, I will also demonstrate how African feminist arguments have transformed over the years and provide a working definition of African feminism that frames this study.

The third section, 'Bride wealth' (roora in Shona and lobola in Ndebele) is an exploration of Shona and Ndebele cultural custom of bride wealth. Bride wealth, marriage,

and motherhood contribute to shaping women's identities, informs how they interpret their social worlds and positioning in private and public spaces. For these discussions, I draw from Zimbabwean feminists like Gaidzanwa (1992), Goredema (2010), and Martin-Shaw (2015) to explore gendered cultural practices and their impact on Zimbabwean women's lives and experiences.

3.1. Feminist Standpoint theory

In this section, I provide an analysis of Standpoint theory and its arguments to provide the framework for arguing for African feminism as a standpoint theory. Evaluation of migration research in the Social Sciences and Humanities demonstrates how theorisation of the diaspora has been influenced by various immigration waves (Brettell and Hollifield, 2015; Shuval 2000). Burnley (2016) notes that competing theoretical frameworks and approaches are used to examine individual diaspora experiences, social relations, and structural impact of migration, (see Berry, 1997; Portes, 2010). These theories differ in their level of analysis and thematic focus. However, their theoretical assumptions were based on migrants losing their identities and assimilating to the country of settlement, thus, viewing them as passive actors (Burnley, 2016; Castles, Haas, and Miller 2014; Lutz, 2010).

The rise of feminism in the United States of America and Europe in the 1960s also saw a rise in feminist challenges to migration research. 'Feminism' as a term is used to describe the women's movement and struggle for social justice and gender equality. Similarly, it is a term that is contested and sometimes used to disparage the very struggle women are fighting for, depending on where one is politically and economically located

(Harding, 2008; Neisser – Heiber, 2012). Feminism emerged as a movement and struggle for equal rights and social justice for women (Bonifacio, 2014). These feminist movements critiqued engendered heteronormative male experiences as the only forms of knowledge and claims to truth and challenged these 'positivist, hierarchical methodological approaches that can lead to distorted data due to these power dynamics' (Gorelick, 1996; 24). These forms of knowledge were based on Positivist approaches to theorising gender and gender relations, privileging men's experiences and rendering women invisible both as scholars and subjects of research (Gorelick, 1994; Oakley and Pattynama, 2006; Nakagawa and Wotipka 2016).

Additionally, feminists argued against the notion of an objective natural world waiting to be discovered by an ahistorical, ungendered objective individual (Cook and Fonnow, 1990). Instead, feminists rejected the notion of objective truth, arguing that knowledge production is historically and socially embedded within a specific space and time (Stanley and Wise, 1991; Wilkinson, 1993). Positivist approaches to knowledge production employed quantitative methods of research which used statistical and analytical measurement to explain phenomena (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000). Instead, feminists advocated for research methods and theorising of women's experiences that gave women opportunities to talk about their experiences in their own voices, while also focusing on issues that were a concern to women and contributed to social change (Esseveld, 1983; Harding, 1986, 1991; Oakley, 1998; Smith, 1974). For example, feminist scholars critiqued earlier migration research that defined women as passive and dependants of their male partners (Lutz, 2010). Instead, migrant experiences are diverse and complex which have led new challenges of theorising transnational, gendered migrant experiences within Social

Science research (Castle, 2010; Kofman, 2004). Integrative theories like Transnationalism Model (Gutierrez, 1998; Vertovec, 2003), Globalisation Theory and Superdiversity (Vertovec, 2006) are employed to theorise these complex migrations and identities (Anthias 2012; Kofman, 2004; Lutz, 2010; Van hear, 2010). Nevertheless, there is a shift towards migration theories which highlight women's experiences as active agents of migration and how gender socially locates migrant women within hierarchies of power (Dunne, 2013; Palmary, Burman, Chantler and Kiguwa 2010).

Western feminists successfully challenged the heteronormative lens through which research was theorised and conceptualised. However, other feminists within the movement were disgruntled further by the homogenising of women's experiences by other women who were argued to have a privileged position due to their race and social class (Collins, 1998; Harding 1986, 2000; Mahalingham, Balan, and Molina, 2009). It was the middle class, privileged women who were the leading voice defining 'gender' and what it is to be a 'woman', though their experiences were significantly different from those who were less privileged, of a different ethnicity, race and religion (Collins, 1990; hooks, 1981; Mays and Comás-Díaz, 1988; Reid and Comas-Díaz, 1990). These differences socially locate women in multiple positionings that determine women's experiences of inequalities and oppression. These challenges to mainstream feminism resulted in the emergence of other feminist epistemologies and theories including Standpoint feminist theory, black feminism and across the border, African feminism(s).

One of the critical challenges to feminist theory was from Standpoint theorists. Standpoint theory emerged in the 1970s/ 1980s as a feminist critical theory (Alcoff and Potter, 1983; Haraway, 1991; Harding, 1991; 2004). Critical theory emerged in Sociology and

Marxist Philosophy in the 1930s, challenging knowledge production and its relationship to practices of power and oppression (Adorno, 1903-1969; Habermas, 1929- 2007). The focus of the theory was on exposing hidden assumptions in theories and practises that reinforced inequalities in order to emancipate marginalised and oppressed groups (Bronner, 2011; Held, 1980; Rush, 2004). However, criticisms of its Marxist framings have led to numerous standpoint approaches and epistemologies (Haraway, 1991; Harding, 2008; Hartsock, 2004). Standpoint theory provides a framework to explain the multiplicity of women's experiences and positionings in different spaces (Harding, 2004; 2008). The theory also helps deconstruct gendered power dynamics in knowledge production and the conception of experience and reality which inform feminist methodology (Ramazanoglu and Holland, 2002). There are three arguments of Standpoint Theory and methodology relevant to this study:

1. Standpoint theory focuses on how knowledge is situated and constructed by individuals who are socially and historically constructed (Harding, 1987; 1991; 2004).
2. It also emphasises the importance of lived experience in knowledge production.
3. It seeks to deconstruct the relationship between researcher and the participants' in the research process.

Standpoint theorist contested the depiction of the lifeworld, the world of experience, as homogenous and as it is represented by mainstream social sciences.

Mainstream social sciences depicts the world as:

- a) How it is viewed through Western categories,
- b) Viewed by white men of a certain class and cultural background,

c) As homogenous.

Harding (1991;2004) argues that there is no objective world to be exposed. Instead, nature exists as it is constructed by individuals within specific cultural contexts. Women's situated experiences are what constitute their lifeworld and in that sense they are real and true as depictions of the lifeworld. On that account, Harding (1991; 2004) suggests 'strong objectivity' based on issues of diversity, difference and multiple standpoints. I discuss this further in the following chapter. Haraway (1991) further problematises Harding's position by arguing for a more dynamic epistemology and contends that though women may have a specific vantage point in experiences of power relations, they have to acknowledge their own situatedness and partiality in knowledge production. Hence, she criticises the notion of situated knowledge as total knowledge of the 'real world' (Rohracher, 2015). Haraway's position is evident in this study, where the findings show that the women were unaware of the significant influences of their colonial history in their narrations of their cultures and impact on their cultural identities and experiences as women.

Black Feminism and Intersectionality

The participants in this study are not only Zimbabwean women, but also black women who experience Britain, from an intersection of different factors. Thus, it is important to engage with literature on black feminism and intersectionality. Collins (1997; 2000) further developed Standpoint theory in Black feminist thought and argued that black women's experiences based on their race and other socio-cultural factors provided them with specific experience of multiple oppressions. She suggests the matrix of domination as

an approach to explore and understand how gender intersects with race, as class as interlocking systems of oppression that affect black women in western countries (Collins, 1990). However, I also add immigration status, as a system of oppression as evidenced by the findings in this study.

Although Black and African feminists are women of colour and agree on black women inhabiting multiple spaces, there are differences between the two movements (Reynolds, 2002; Smith, 2004). Black feminism is a movement that came out of American and black British women's experiences, shaped by slavery, and continued systemic oppression. In contrast, African feminism is a movement that was born out of the experiences of African women's oppression, shaped by a history of colonialism and culture practises that define women's identities. Most importantly, recognising the diverse cultures, languages and experiences of women who are from a diversity of countries that make up the African continent (Kolawole, 2002). Reynolds, (2002) notes these differences by noting how black voices within western media and academia, have come to represent all black women's experiences. She argues, however, that some these narratives marginalise other black women and pathologise their experiences. Therefore, it is important to have an intersectional approach that addresses these differences among black women across the different contexts.

Intersectionality is central to black feminism and debates on its definition existed before Crenshaw coined in 1989 (Collins and Blige, 2016; Phoenix and Pattynama, 2006; Shields 2008). There are debates on the conceptualisation of intersectionality and heterogenous ways it is employed in various disciplines (Collins and Blige, 2016; Corlett and Mavin, 2014). An intersectional approach in African feminist research challenges essentialist

conceptualisation of gender, culture, and embodiment. Chilisa and Ntseane (2010) propose that African women inhabit particular social locations, informed by their cultures, colonial history, class, ethnicity and other factors that intersect in their experiences of gender, gender relations and inequality (Beoku-Betts, Adomako Ampofo, and Osirim 2008; Norwood, 2013). However, increased globalisation, improved communication and transnational links between the diaspora and home countries have challenged cultural boundaries and assumptions.

In this study, intersectionality is employed as an analytic tool through which I explore the women's multiple social locations based on their immigration status, African identity, Zimbabweanness, and other identities that are all operative and intersect simultaneously in their lives in England and Zimbabwe. Findings from this study show that some of the participants still have strong links with 'home' (Zimbabwe), as they have family in Zimbabwe whom they regularly visit. These transnational links are utilised in many ways to redefine their cultural identities and maintain their heritage, living in a country (Britain) that has a history of marginalising black people (Gilroy, 1987; Cohen, 2015).

In summary, Standpoint theory has significantly influenced feminist theory and the researching of diverse women's experiences in the Social Sciences. It has brought to the fore issues of concern to marginalised women. Furthermore, its arguments are critical to the deconstruction of mainstream conceptions of gender and hierarchies of power in knowledge production and the validity of that knowledge. These specific arguments on situated knowledge production underpin African Feminist epistemologies and methodologies based on specific cultural and historical context. In the following section, I will define African feminism and related debates. I will also analyse how gender intersects

with culture, colonialism and other factors in the participants' knowledge production and claims to 'truth'.

3.2. African feminism

In this section, I will start by discussing the trajectory of African feminism and the debates and influences that inform my arguments for African feminist standpoint theory. These arguments also form the basis for utilising the definition of African feminism, as argued by Goredema (2010). Unlike western feminisms, where the trajectory is framed within a specific distinction of different waves, Goredema (2010:35) argues that African feminism(s) is 'dependant on a temporal scale, shaped by political eras of precolonial, colonial and post-colonial Africa'. These time scales are central to feminist debates and critique on gender, gender relations and social positioning of women in Africa and in the diaspora.

Feminist activism has always existed in Africa, however, as a movement for gender equality, African feminism emerged in the 1980s out of the experiences of African women's oppression (Arnfred 2004;Mohanty, 2003). The movement was shaped by a history of colonialism and cultural practises that prioritised men's interests and authority. These cultural and economic practices created power hierarchies and gender inequality, which saw most African women in low wages stuck in agricultural and rural activities (Akin-Aina, 2011; Mikell, 1997). African feminism as an organised movement also emerged as a critique of the notion of a feminist 'global sisterhood' that marginalised African women's experiences (Mohanty, 1991). Furthermore, the term 'feminism' is contested, since it is argued to be a western concept that defined gender, womanhood and family in ways that were contrary to

African women's lives (Kolawole, 2002; Lewis, 2000; Mama, 2000). Mama (2000) goes further to note that 'feminism' as a term does not exist in African languages. Hence, some African women developed alternative concepts that captured the centrality of motherhood, family, and social relationships. These new concepts addressed their cultural specificities to rid it of what was perceived as western influences (Mekgwe, 2010). These included STIWANISM (Structural Transformations in African Including Women) by Ogundipe- Leslie (1994), 'Motherism' (Obianuju-Acholonu, 1995) and Kolawole's womanism, (Arndt, 2002). Specific to Zimbabwean feminists, Martin-Shaw (2015) notes issues of naming were not a problem to Zimbabwean women, who were happy with the use of feminism to describe themselves and their activism. Furthermore, other African feminists' critique of western origins of feminism did not dissuade them from utilising the term. Essof (2013) further suggests that this is because of the historical relationships Zimbabwe had with western countries, like the then Soviet Union and the Republic of China during the independence struggle. It is also important to note that though African feminism critiqued Eurocentric approaches to theorising African women, questions of its definition and challenges to global forces are still being raised today (Makaudze, 2016).

In earlier attempts to theorise African women's experiences, Mohanty (1991) employed the term 'Third world' feminism to differentiate minority women's experiences. She argued that earlier western feminist scholarship on women in developing countries created a third world woman, who was passive, stagnant, oppressed and a victim of patriarchy (see also Chilisa and Ntseane, 2010). Additionally, this representation of third world women homogenised diverse groups of African women, who were differentiated by class, education, religion and sexuality and other factors. The universalised African female

subject does not exist, African women's identities are multiple and differentiated across, cultures, class, socio-economic status, and other political and social variables. Consequently, within feminist research, there are no privileged subjects, instead, all positionings are subject to critical re-examination (Mohanty, 1984; 1991). Mohanty (1991; 2003) has since developed her arguments and proposes that theorisation of African women should recognise their transnationality and diverse influences within different contexts. I will further discuss the transformation of African feminism later in the section.

Wane (2011) captures the essence of African feminism by emphasising the gendered experiences of women and their distinct relationship between with their cultures, history and its interplay with spirituality, faith, tradition and custom (see also Kanengoni 2013). Over the years, the focus of African feminisms has transformed because of global economic, technological, and political changes (Mohanty, 2003; Oyekan, 2014). Aina - Akin (2011), in her mapping of the evolution of African feminism, notes that African feminists recognise the diversity of African women resulting in the conception of African feminisms that captures the multiplicity and complexity of African women's experiences. In addition, they also recognise the impact of global influences on African women's lives. Previously, African feminism privileged African women on the continent and its use of 'African' was based on geography, history, and the need to deconstruct western negative descriptions of Africa and African women (Mekgwe, 2010). A global approach shifted their focus from an emphasis *on 'bread, butter, culture and power'* issues in the 1980s and 1990s (Mikell, 1997: p. 4) to a focus on global influences on African women's lives and gender power hierarchies (Oyekan, 2014). These changes have forced African feminists to employ African feminist epistemologies and theories across international boundaries (Arnfred et al. 2004; Beoku-

Betts, Adomako Ampofo, and Osirim 2008; Mohanty, 2000; Oyekan, 2014). Rodriguez et al. (2015) concur by suggesting that a transnational approach to researching African women exposes their social networks, maintained through remittances, visits and other ways and how they are employed as a resource for the women across borders. Understanding of western and African feminist tensions was also important for defining my own position in the study and how I analysed the women's narrations. I will discuss my reflections and participation in the next chapter.

There are numerous debates on the definition of African feminism and the various theoretical strands that make up African feminisms (Lewis, 2001), nevertheless, African feminists recognise similarities between different approaches that form key arguments that embody African feminist thinking (Aina, 2011). I utilise Goredema's (2010: 34) definition of African feminism for this study, who defines African feminism as a:

feminist epistemology and a form of rhetoric that has provided arguments, which validate the experience of women of Africa and of African origin against a mainstream feminist discourse.....African feminism concerns itself not only with the rights of women from Africa but is also inclusive of those living in the Diaspora.

Goredema's definition of African feminism is used for this study because firstly, she recognises African feminism not only as a movement for gender equality but an epistemology with specific arguments and assumptions. Secondly, the definition includes women, both on the continent and in the diaspora. As such, this study is an attempt to analyse the participants' gendered experiences and embodiment within a transnational context, that defines gender and womanhood in contradictory ways. An example of an African feminist who has employed African feminist standpoint theory is Naidu (2010). She employed the theory to research marginalised black South African women, who work as

domestic workers for white South African families and Zulu dancers in a cultural village for tourists. She argues that utilising Standpoint theory in her research helped her to identify the multiple contradictory standpoints that the participants inhabited as black women, domestic workers, and dancers in racialised contexts. She used standpoint theory to illustrate how the women used their agency and available socio-cultural resources to resist ascribed identities by the tourists, employers and wider society in a manner that may not be easily recognisable to western feminists. Employing African feminist standpoint theory also allows me to analyse the women's agency in how they employed available socio-cultural resources like language, food, new social networks to resist ascribed racialised labels, experiences of racism and discrimination. Further, I analyse how they reconstruct their cultural identities and reconfigured their marriages, motherhood, and social relationships 'in-between' spaces. In the following section, I will discuss gender conceptualisation to contextualise the study.

3.2.1 The conceptualisation of Gender and its link with culture

In this section, I will analyse gender conceptualisation within African feminist scholarship, emphasising how gender is interwoven with culture and historical influences. In chapter three, I examined the colonial history of Zimbabwe and its impact on women's gendered identities. In this section, I focus specifically on African feminist conceptualisation and researching of gender in African cultures.

In both Western and African feminism, gender has been central to academic debates on Social Science research and knowledge production (Beoku-Betts, Adomako Ampofo, and

Osirim 2008; Hesser- Biber, 2012; Oyewumi, 1997; 2004). African scholars, Amadiume (1987); Oyewumi, (1997; 2004; 2005), Oyekan (2014) and Steady (2004) were influential in challenging Eurocentric conceptualisation of gender and its inapplicability to African women's experiences and social realities. Oyewumi (2004) argues that any theorising of African women's experiences must consider the epistemological assumptions on gender and gender relations. African feminists critiqued Eurocentric approaches to feminist research that were based on 'individualism and control of women within capitalist industrialising societies with an emphasis on nuclear families and women's role within these institutions (Mikell, 1997: 4). This nuclear family model was based on the functionalist definition of family as an institutional and spatial configuration, with a husband, wife, and children (Oyewumi, 2004). Colonialism transposed the nuclear model of the family onto the African context. Thereby distorting knowledge of gender, gender relations and hierarchies of power in African women's lives.

Conversely, Oyewumi (1997; 2004) argues that the African family is not a bounded entity. Instead, the 'family' is defined as a community of belonging constituted by different types of family unions, kinships networks, and other social relationships (Oheneba-Sakyi and Takyi, 2006; Oyewumi, 1997, 2004). In Zimbabwe, prior to colonisation, the family as an institution was not only centred around biological connections, but also the extended family and kinship networks. Families were connected by cultural ties, where people shared their resources, i.e. land and production (Leeder 2004; Nyathi, 2005; Chirozva, Mubaya, and Mukamuri, 2014). It is important to note that global economic changes and movement of people has transformed the concept of the family, both in western and African cultures (Balan, and Molina, 2009; Kufakurinani, Pasura and McGregor, 2014; Mahler, Chaudhuri,

and Patil 2015; Nzira, 2011). McGregor (2008), in her research with Zimbabwean families in Britain, found that the crisis in Zimbabwe, experiences of racism, and discrimination in Britain and different approaches to child rearing created tensions within the families. These resulted in a reconfiguration of the family and power hierarchies within. Regardless of the various constructions of the family, it is still a principal site for gender socialisation and performances (Mahler, Chaudhuri, and Patil 2015).

Oyewumi (2004) further argues that western feminist research on gender within a nuclear family model resulted in, firstly, a biologically based conception of gender. Thus women have a dichotomous relationship with men (Nzegwu 2006; 2012). Secondly, when differences are based on biology, gender becomes a primary organising principle of gendered power dynamics and social life that separates the domestic and the public space (Bakare – Yusuf, 2002; Frank, 2002; Terry, 2016). The separation of the domestic and public spaces is clearly evident in Zimbabwe today which is a consequence of colonialism and Christianity.

One of the key arguments of African feminists, is how the conceptualisation of gender can not be separated from its cultural basis and influences of colonialism. Within African societies, differences between males and females are located within social-cultural practises and not only biological differences (Oyewumi, 2004; 2011). Hence, “gender” is actually more about gendering—a process—than about something inherent in social relations’ (Oyewumi, 2011: 2). Therefore, any understanding of gender must consider how gender and gender relations have been enacted within specific cultures and histories. In chapter two, I analysed the term culture and provided a definition relevant to this study. In the previous chapter, I also discussed arguments on how Zimbabwe, with its diverse

languages and ethnicities, is a creation of colonialism, thus, there is no homogenous Zimbabwean culture (Mlambo, 2014). Notwithstanding, there are some shared cultural beliefs, traditions and practises that have shaped Zimbabwean Shona and Ndebele women's identities, gender relations and embodiment within private and public spaces. In the following section, I explore 'bride wealth' marriage and family in Shona marriage and demonstrate how these practices inform how gender and gender roles are enacted in women's lives.

3.2.2. 'Bride wealth' (Roora in Shona and Lobola in Ndebele), Marriage and Family

Marriage and 'bride wealth' are cultural practices that are gendered and embedded within power structures that define gender and ascribes gendered roles to women (Mangena and Ndlovu 2013; Shenje-Peyton 1996). These ascriptions become important to how women experience their bodies and are interpreted by others in specific contexts. I focus on 'bride wealth' and marriage, as the findings show that 'bride wealth', marriage and cultural expectations implicitly influenced the women's reconstruction of their cultural identities and sense of belonging in the diaspora. Therefore, an analysis of the marriage practices of the Shona and Ndebele people is essential to this study because it sets the context for understanding the women's experiences and reconfiguring of their families in the diaspora. In the study, participants were of different marital statuses and marital status was vital to how the women perceived themselves and how other Zimbabwean women and men perceived them.

Marriage is a complex system that follows many stages and may incorporate both western and traditional marriage systems before a woman can go and live with her husband and his family (Nzira, 2011). The traditional part of the marriage process is the payment of roora/lobola which in English is defined as 'bride wealth' (Chireshe and Chireshe 2010). Bride wealth is a cultural practice referring to the 'transfer of property, usually money or livestock, by a future husband to the bride's family', as a process of cementing a marriage union (Shenje-Peyton 1996: 106). The purpose of the bride wealth is for the bride groom to show his appreciation for the bride's family and show his commitment to the marriage. It was also not an individual affair, instead it united the two families (Mangena and Ndlovu, 2013; Shenje-Peyton, 1996). There are numerous other processes that the bridegroom goes through, which are not within scope of this study.

The purpose of the 'bride wealth' was also to confer power and rights from the control of the father to the control of the husband and his family (Mawere and Mawere, 2010). The husband and his family have legal rights over any children born in the marriage (Shenje-Peyton 1996). Since the marriage is between families and not individuals, any challenges to the marriage are dealt with by the two families. Additionally, any marriage union where the 'bride wealth' is not paid are viewed unfavourably within society (Mangena and Ndlovu 2013). Renegotiating of gender relations, motherhood and the role of extended family were the main themes in the study. Some participants in the study had families in Zimbabwe mediating in situations in the diaspora. I discuss, this further in Chapter Seven.

In Zimbabwe, marriage is considered one of the main building blocks of African societies and through which the family is established and maintained (Chirozva, Mubaya, and Mukamuri, 2012). There are numerous types of marriage systems, from co-habiting,

customary law marriage to registered civil marriage. These marriage systems are governed by state law and give women different rights dependent on the type of marriage (Bourdillon, 1987; Dube, 2013). Marriage customs being discussed in this section are not practised by all Shona and Ndebele people. Instead, some women are no longer adhering to these cultural practices, due to their beliefs on gender equality, influences of globalisation and exposure to other cultures (Tevera and Mubaya, 2014). Additionally, family socio-economic status, and education may influence their approach to bride wealth and marriage customs.

Payment of bride wealth is a contentious and complex issue in Zimbabwe, since colonial times (West, 2002). Colonial administrators tried to standardise and control payment of 'bridewealth' through the Native Marriages Act 1950. However, responses to the Act were varied, based on individuals' political allegiances, economic status, social class, gender, age, and religion (West, 2002). The marriage process of paying bride wealth is also contested within various African movements, with some women arguing against bride wealth, where families may see the practise as a route to financial security and husbands may exert power over their wives. I suggest that the issue of 'bridewealth' and marriage are cultural customs that contribute to the controlling and policing of women's bodies. These practices are tied to social expectations on women's behaviour and mobility and are part of what it means to be a woman in Zimbabwe. Additionally, such customs reinforce the subjugation of women and lack of access to resources, because the women are considered the property of men (Zezeza, 1997). Consequently, roora/ lobola is commercialised and women's bodies are commodified (Tamale, 2008). Although, Zimbabwean independence (1980) saw many changes to women's minority status, including the Legal age of Majority Act 1982, they still required their parents' permission to get married (Freeman, 1994).

Earlier in this chapter, I examined African feminist arguments on gender conceptualisation and its relationship to culture. I also noted how seniority, age, and kinship relationships are also used to organise families and social relations (Nzwegu, 2004; Oyewumi, 1997, 2004; Steady, 2004). Thus, when a woman is married in Shona and Ndebele customs, she takes up various roles within the family, including being a wife, daughter-in-law, sister-in-law, and other related social roles (Nzira, 2011). There are power hierarchies between the mother-in-law (*amwene*), daughter-in-law (*muroora*) and sister-in-law (*tete*) that are not gendered, but are based on kinship relationships (Jaji, 2016). These relationships confer power to *amwene* and *tete* over *muroora*. However, other Shona kinship relationships also mean that Shona men defer to specific women from their mother's lineage (Jaji, 2016). The findings in this study shows that these power hierarchies are also transposed to the diasporic space, challenged, and renegotiated.

Marriage is not only about bringing families together; it also serves as a foundation for the growth of the family through childbearing. The issues of motherhood have been fundamental to African feminist arguments (Lewis, 2000). Oyewumi (1997; 2004); Amadiume (1997) and Mikell (1998) argued against western feminism that made motherhood peripheral to feminist scholarship, a stance which contrasted with African cultures, where motherhood is fundamental to their cultural identities. Specific to Shona and Ndebele cultures, children provide stability to the marriage and are considered essential to the family's heritage; without children the marriage is considered incomplete. This puts pressure on the woman to reproduce and continue the family lineage, and if the couple cannot produce children, various cultural remedies are taken (Gonese, 2010; Chingombe et al. 2012). Since marriage was between families, raising of children was also premised upon

the same principle of the extended family, who helped to teach and direct the child in the right ways (Mawere and Mubaya, 2014).

3.3. Conclusion

African feminists argue for the recognition of the importance of family in African families and I have discussed how the Zimbabwean family was transformed by colonialism, Christianity, and African Pentecostalism. However, it is also important to bear in mind that the family is in continuous transformation because of global, historical, and economic transformations. For example, in the diaspora, individuals encounter different gender norms and expectations in the diaspora and these norms socially position men and women in multiple contradictory ways. African feminism is argued as a standpoint theory due to its specific stance on the conceptualisation of gender, power hierarchies within specific African cultures. Additionally, the women's cultural identities are not only based on their gender but also social relationships, which determine social locations and positions. These social identities are important to the women and have an impact on their lives in the diasporic space, when they interact with family and other Zimbabwean groups.

As a Zimbabwean woman researching other Zimbabwean women, African feminism, standpoint theory, provides me with a framework to explore the women's lives in a manner that does not denigrate their culture or lives in the UK. To avoid essentialising of women in the diasporic space based on their culture, intersectionality is a tool that exposes the differences between women and how they deal with conflicts within themselves, and between them and other Zimbabweans based on social class and socio-economic factors. Furthermore, their daily interaction with other people from diverse cultures. Research

methods are also important to African feminist research, as they argue for methods that recognise women's cultures and are respectful of them. The following chapter on methodology will further discuss, how Standpoint theory arguments are central to research methods employed to collect and analyse the data.

Chapter 4

Methodological Considerations

In this chapter, I start by discussing Hermeneutic/ Interpretive Phenomenology as the philosophy underpinning the study. Feminist argument on the importance of lived experience informed the qualitative research methods that were employed in this study. One of the main arguments of Hermeneutic Phenomenology is the centrality of experience and the interpretive process of understanding that experience.

The chapter is divided into four sections.

The first section, Interpretive phenomenology, experience, and feminist research is an exploration of phenomenology, interpretative hermeneutics and feminists arguments on the centrality of 'lived' experience to knowledge production and methodology.

The second section, Methodology in action, provides a breakdown of the research process, including the interviews and analysis of the women's accounts. Ethics are essential to feminist research, hence, in this section, I also discuss how my experiences and social location impacted the choice of research focus, questions and analysis process.

The third section, Interpreting and analysis of participant accounts, explicates how Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) was employed to analyse the participant accounts. For the group interviews, Palmer et al (2010) eight step method of analysis was employed to analyse the narrations and for the semi-structured interviews, Standard IPA derived from Smith et al (2009) was used.

The fourth section, Positioning myself in the research study, is a critical reflexive analysis on how my identity as a Zimbabwean, British migrant woman shaped and impacted the research process.

4.1. Interpretive Phenomenology, Experience and Feminist Research

There are various approaches on Phenomenology, in this study, I will specifically focus on Interpretive phenomenology and its relevance to the study, drawing from Husserl (1913,1927,1997) and Merleau-Ponty (1945; 1948; 2004).The purpose of this study is not to generalise the experiences of the participants to all Zimbabwean women in Britain. Instead, the study is a phenomenological examination of the women's experiences of the diaspora.

Neubauer, Witkop, Varpio (2019:91) define Phenomenology as 'an approach to research that seeks to describe the essence of a phenomenon by exploring it from the perspective of those who have experienced it.' Hence, the study explores the women's experiences of migration and settlement in England and its impact on their cultural identities. There are numerous perspectives on defining and researching social reality and individual experiences, each with its own assumptions about reality and knowledge production (Harding, 2004, 2009; Ramazanoglu and Holland, 2002). Hermeneutic/ Interpretive phenomenology was developed by Husserl and is interested in the relation between one's consciousness and objects of knowledge. His approach was focused on how individuals experienced a phenomenon and or the object. Husserl's work on Phenomenology is influential in defining experience and its role in understanding the 'life world' (see Horrigan-Kelly, Millar, and Dowling, 2016 on interpretations and analysis of his

work). Husserl employed the concept of lifeworld to refer to a world that is socially constructed and not an objective world waiting to be explored.

Notions of experience are central to phenomenological arguments in Social Science research, with significant contributions from scholars like Kant; Hegel and Husserl (see Cimino and Leijenhorst 2018; Lavery, 2003 for an analysis of Phenomenology). There are questions in feminist research on definitions of experiences, its validity and role in the acquisition of knowledge in (Mulinari and Sandell, 1999; Ramazanoglu and Holland, 1999; Reynolds, 2002). Experience in this study refers to 'one's own consciousness of our social existence. It grasps our way of being in the world' (Ramazanoglu and Holland, 1999:383). This is important in this study as I argue that the women are active agents who participate in the production and reproduction of gendered cultural scripts that they may find limiting and oppressive in the diaspora. Additionally, Husserl argued that individuals' experiences are influenced by the world in which they live, and that world is rooted in time and space, thus, context and place is important (Neubauer et al. 2019; Sloan and Bowe, 2014; Willig, 2009). Reynolds further the argument on experience, by questions the notions on experience, when exploring black women's lives (Reynolds, 2002). She notes that black women's experiences are diverse and that this should be recognised within research and policy discussions and debates.

This is important to this study as the participants' lives were shaped in a specific context of Zimbabwe and then they migrated and settled in Britain, a country with a colonial connection with their country of origin.

During the late 20th century, other scholars further developed Hermeneutic Phenomenology, including Merleau Ponty (1945;1962). Merleau-Ponty's contribution to this study is the focus on the body and its historical and social location. He argues that the body is embodied through social and culturally defined expressions that assign meanings to the body. The understanding of these cultural gendered meaning is through exploring one's experience of his/her gendered body. A fundamental argument within Standpoint theory is women's social location provides them with a vantage point for a specific experience of a phenomenon (Collins, 1990; Intemann, 2019; Narayan, 2004). In addition, African feminists argues for research methods that emphasise the power and agency of African women and theorise from their experiences of cultures and social relationships central to identities (Chilisa and Ntseane, 2010; Lewis, 2004; Mama, 2011). These cultural practises and relationships are central to how the participants reconstruct their cultural identities in transnational spaces.

Brah (1996) argues that although the experience is not reflective of social reality, it is a result of socio-cultural processes and institutional policies that construct reality as experienced by individuals. Therefore, the analysis of women's experiences of everyday life gives researchers an insight into how gender and social relations are created and power hierarchies are maintained and negotiated in women's everyday lives (Collins, 2000; 2003; Harding, 1997; 2004; Ramazanoglu and Holland, 2012; Sprague, 2016). In the following section, I discuss the research methods that were employed to explore the women's experiences, and the challenges of the research process.

4.2. Methodology in Action

In this section, I will discuss the research process. I will start the section by discussing participant recruitment and the ethical challenges I faced during the process. Following on, I will discuss the interview process, starting with how the interview questions were developed, followed by a discussion on the focus group and semi -structured interviews. The section will finish with an analysis of the individual interviews.

Before the interviews commenced all the participants were given an information sheet and consent form to sign (See Appendix A and B). As I stated earlier in chapter two, the Zimbabwean diaspora in Britain is made up of diverse ethnicities and languages, with Shona speaking people making up the majority of Zimbabwean diaspora in Britain. They all migrated to Britain through different routes and are concentrated in London and other major cities due to employment opportunities (Mano and Willems 2010; Mitton and Aspinall, 2011). Therefore, the participant sample in this study was reflective of the diversity of Zimbabwean diaspora population in Britain.

Ethical values are central to feminist research, particularly as they entail exploring women's experiences in private spaces and sharing them in public domains (Letherby, 2003). Feminists argue that ethical considerations are embedded within every stage of the research process and should be made salient (Ribbens and Edwards, 1998)⁴. Therefore,

⁴ Before I could commence any data collection, I went through the first ethics procedure required by the university to ascertain the study's adherence to stipulated guidelines on protection, confidentiality, and anonymity (see Appendix A and B for information sheets and consent forms).

embedded within this process will be a discussion on the ethical challenges I faced in the various stages of the research process.

4.2.1. Participant recruitment

In this section, I will specifically focus on the recruitment process and the ethical challenges I faced. A Snowballing technique was used to recruit participants; a method that utilises participants' social networks and interpersonal relationships to access specific groups that are marginalised (Bhopal, 2008; Woodley and Lockard, 2016). The aim was to draw participants from diverse communities in different areas of the North West. As a Zimbabwean who has some connections with other Zimbabweans in Britain, I mistakenly assumed that participant recruitment would be unproblematic. However, I had numerous struggles recruiting participants and conducting the interviews. I assumed that shared experiences, culture, language, and gender would be enough to build rapport with the potential participants. Stacey (1988: 116) a feminist ethnographer, describes it as a 'delusion of the alliance' where a researcher assumes a connection with participants based on shared values. Some women felt intimidated by the fact that I was doing a PhD and were hesitant to participate. I discuss this further in the following section on my positioning in the research process. The challenges in recruitment and the research process brought to the fore the tensions and ethical challenges between methodology, theory and conducting research in real life settings.

Some of the ethical challenges include, firstly, potential participants verbally consenting to the study and being reluctant to sign the consent forms prior to commencing the interviews. The women saw me as a group member and wanted to dispense with the

formalities of research. However, I had to continually emphasise the importance of the consent forms in protecting them and myself. Additionally, I emphasised that the forms were also evidence of their consent to participate in the study.

Secondly, I had to negotiate access to participant groups through male 'gate keepers', who had the power to deny access or limit women's participation in the study. The issue of gate keepers and their role and power in the research process is documented in various feminist scholarship (See Hesse-Biber 2011; Mandel, 2003; Maynard and Purvis, 1994). Standpoint feminists argue that objective value free research does not exist, as power hierarchies exist within the research process, shape knowledge production and representation of women's voices in research (Hesse-Biber 2011; Maynard, 1994; Sprague, 2016; Willig, 2008). Hesse-Biber, (2011) further notes that the use of gate keepers involves issues of power and ability of participants to consent to a study, as participants may feel 'forced' to consent due to the power and position of the male gate keeper. In this study, two of the groups were chaired by males. The group in Reading had a male gate keeper, who on the day of the group discussion before the interviews commenced, told the women to 'talk sense and not just talk about makeup and clothes.' I found the comment offensive but chose not to say anything for fear of being denied access. I will discuss further issues of ethics and my role in the study later in the chapter. In another group in Manchester, I faced challenges of recruitment as the male leader wanted to meet at odd times and places to discuss the research. I decided to abandon my efforts to work with the group and conduct the interviews with another group elsewhere.

Lastly, to reach a wider audience, I joined several Zimbabwean women Facebook groups that were recommended by friends. However, I faced ethical challenges when I joined Zimbabwean Face book groups to recruit participants. Recruitment on the groups was

predicated on my interaction with other members. The challenge was being careful that my opinions and views shared on the groups would not influence the participants' responses in the interviews. Mauthner, Birch, Jessop, and Miller, (2002) note that strategies employed to recruit participants may also have an impact on the interview process. Indeed, during the individual interviews, participants referenced the groups on issues that were related to the interview topic. For example, issues of raising children in the diaspora which was one of the main findings in the study.

4.2.2. Interview Process

In this sub-section, I discuss the interview process, including, development of interview questions, how the focus groups, semi-structured interviews and participant observations were conducted.

Development of interview questions

Open-ended questions about the women's lives in Zimbabwe and Britain were used because they gave the women an opportunity to talk freely about their experiences and through their narrations, their cultural identities and sense of belonging emerged from their accounts. Anthias (2002) note that direct questions on one's identity are difficult to answer, as individuals have multiple identities that intersect in various ways dependant on context, time, and space. However, participants' 'identities' emerge as they share about their lives and cultural practices (Anthias, 2002). The interview questions explored both the women's

past lives in Zimbabwe and their lives in the diaspora, in order to demonstrate how their identities have changed over time. The questions also helped to understand the meanings assigned to the socio-cultural resources they use to create new belongings in the diasporic space. The main questions were piloted with three Zimbabwean women in the diaspora, who provided feedback on the suitability of the interview questions. During the interviews prompt questions were then used to explore topics.

Focus group interviews

Five focus group interviews were conducted with already existing groups of Zimbabwean women from Manchester (2), Reading (1), Wolverhampton (1), Northampton (1) that met for social, religious, and political purposes. The groups comprised of between 6-8 women in each group. The individual breakdown of the participants in the groups is not available, as it was difficult to ascertain personal details for some participants in a group setting. However, the groups were made up of diverse ages, socio-economic and immigration statuses. Their ages, and immigration statuses were evidenced in the narrations of some of the participants when they talked about their experiences of immigration. The focus group interviews served to contextualise the study (please see Appendix C, Table 1 for group profiles). There are advantages to employing focus group interviews with existing groups including:

- The generation of contextual data in areas where prior research maybe lacking (Morgan, 1997).
- The members of the group are in a social context with other members they are familiar with and have relationships.

- Multiple voices are heard at one time, especially in cases where a researcher is having challenges recruiting participants (McLafferty 2004).

Although there are advantages to using group interviews, there were also disadvantages and these include:

- Some women may not feel free to share their personal challenges, especially around immigration status, for fear of being reported or stigmatised.
- Participants can alter their views or present their stories differently, so the data gathered may not reflect their true experiences (Bryman, 2008).

Questions for the group interviews were different to the individual interviews, as they were more general and explored the women's perceptions of what it meant to them to be Zimbabwean women and their experiences in the diaspora (see Appendix, D). The questions were translated to Shona and I asked the questions using the word 'we'. Hence the question was; when we say that we are Zimbabwean women in the UK, what do we mean by that? When the questions were translated into Shona, they elicited more discussions. I suggest that the use of 'we' and Shona created rapport with the women and broke down some of the barriers that positioned me as an outsider. Challenges and validity of language translations is at the centre of cross-cultural research studies (Squires 2009; Van Nes, Abma, Jonsson and Deeg, 2010). Van Nes et al. (2010) note that language differences may have an impact on the research process, as concepts and phrases are understood differently by participants when used in their language. I suggest that by asking the questions in Shona, using 'we', it brought the discussion to a level that included me as a member of the Zimbabwean women diaspora and a recognition of some shared experiences. Collins (2003: 2020) describes it as 'a choice that embeds me in the group I am

studying instead of distancing me from it'. The question I was posing to the group was also a question for me too, as I was also on the journey to discovering what that meant to me as a British – Zimbabwean woman. Themes on marriage and children raised in these discussions were further discussed in the in-depth interviews that followed. In the following subsection, I will discuss how participant observation was also central to the discussions and understanding group interactions.

Participant Observation

The group interviews were about an hour and a half each. However, before commencing the interviews, I was invited to take part in several sessions on the days of the interviews. I used this time for participant observation, which enabled me to fully immerse myself in the group activities. Additionally, it allowed me to better understand group dynamics, observe their protocols and interactions (See May 2011). For example, before the interview with the RRM group, one woman, a visitor, Maidei shared her concerns about her cheating husband. The other women offered their support and reminded her that she was the wife and the other woman wanted to replace her and have what she had. Some of the women in the group advised Maidei not to give the woman a chance to take her place by not divorcing her husband. Participation in group activities meant that the women felt relaxed in my presence and were ready to share intimate stories of their private lives.

The facilitator then proceeded to deliver her lesson for the day, which was on the need for women to treat their husbands as 'kings in the home' (the term used by participants to discuss their relationships). It was interesting that the topic was met with intense emotional responses from some of the women who were concerned that their

needs were being ignored. Some women refuted this advice and felt that their children came first, and their husbands were last. Exposure to these discussions gave me an opportunity to observe the women's interactions and debates on their relationships and where they socially positioned themselves in their families. May (2011) notes that participant observations and follow up interviews help-elucidate on the phenomenon in question; hence, I was able to build on these discussions during the interviews.

Semi-structured Interviews

Following on from the focus group interviews, Semi-structured interviews were conducted with nine Zimbabwean women diasporas from London, Manchester, Wolverhampton, Birmingham, Coventry, and Sheffield. Recruitment was not targeted to these specific areas, but it is where participants volunteered to take part in the research. The ages of the participants were between twenty-three to sixty-five years of age, with forty as the mean age. Most of the women in the groups were married in Zimbabwe, had children before settling in Britain and were of various immigration statuses. All participants had been in Britain for more than ten years. The participants were Shona speaking with one woman who spoke Manyika and four of the women spoke Ndebele, although, they could also speak Shona. All participants spoke English and interviews were conducted in both English and Shona (see Appendix F, Table 2 for Participant profile). The women in the groups were reluctant to participate in the individual interviews, so I used to Facebook groups to further recruit participants. Nevertheless, the women provided new insights into themes that were discussed in the group interviews.

The use of semi-structured interviews is in line with Standpoint feminist theory and African feminist arguments on research methodologies that allow women to speak about their experiences from their standpoint. Gallenta (2013:2) notes that:

Semi-structured interviews create openings for a narrative to unfold..... leaves a space through which you might explore with participants the contextual influences evident in the narratives but not always narrated as such.

The semi-structured interviews provided insight into the women's everyday lives and how cultural practices and values shaped their identities and relationships. However, I am aware that the women's narrations were a snapshot of a point in time and constitute partial knowledge (Letherby, 2003). I conducted the interviews within most of the participants' homes, one interview was conducted on Manchester Metropolitan University campus. The interview questions started with introductory questions whose purpose was to ascertain the demographics of the participants. This was followed by questions on their lives, journey from Zimbabwe and life in Britain (See Appendix E for interview questions). The interviews lasted for an hour and a half to two hours each. Prompt questions were then used for clarification. Some of the prompt questions led to some participants realising some aspects of their lives that they had not thought about nor reflected on. For example, when I noted that Eli was significantly influenced by women in her life, she responded by noting how she had never thought about it like that before which made her reflect on how the women had shaped her life and relationships.

Conducting the interviews in the participants' homes also meant that they were in their comfort zone and able to share freely. Some participants provided Zimbabwean food I had not eaten in twenty years, which helped to build rapport. In other interviews, discussing knowledge of food helped to break down the power dynamics between the

participants and myself, as I became a guest and fellow Zimbabwean in their homes and not only a researcher (See Appendix G, for an extract of a dialogue between the researcher and participant that demonstrate shared experiences, rapport and co-constructing of knowledge). However, social relationships based on cultural expectations were maintained in the interviews, as a way of respecting the older women. I will discuss how cultural expectations shaped the interview process later in the chapter.

The participant accounts were then recorded, transcribed and some of the interviews were translated from Shona to English. Inhetveen (2012) notes that during translations of participant accounts, some of the meanings are distorted. So, the translations from Shona to English were challenging and did not fully capture participants' meanings. For example, Dee shared how she maintained her connection with home through food. She uses the colloquial term, 'chihighfields' in her reference to how she cooks and eats Sadza with cows' feet. Highfields is a residential place in Harare, Zimbabwe. The place is home to people with lower socio-economic status and high unemployment rates. For one to know what Dee is describing, one must know the place, and the slang words that are used to describe the people, their social class and Furthermore, the phrase is difficult to translate into English as the essence of the phrase is lost. The following section discusses the process of analysis and provides justification for the use of Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) in the study.

4.3. Interpreting and Analysis of Participant Accounts

In this section, I will discuss how the transcriptions were analysed using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) and how themes were identified that answered the research questions. Different IPA approaches were used to analyse the data. Palmer, Larkin, de Visser and Fadden's (2010) eight IPA protocol was used to analyse the focus group interviews (see Appendix 8 for details of the protocol). Standard IPA, based on Smith (1996) Smith and Langridge (2007) was used to analyse the individual interviews, I will discuss standard IPA in later in the section. In the following subsection, IPA will be examined first, followed by the analysis of the focus group interviews and individual narrations.

4.3.1. Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA)

IPA is an approach developed by Smith (1996) that is interested in phenomenological and idiographic approach to understanding a phenomenon (Eatough & Smith 2006; Reid et al. 2005; Smith, Flowers, and Larkin, 2009). An idiographic approach means that a researcher is interested in individual experiences of a phenomenon and the social processes that produce the phenomenon (Vasileiou, Barnett, Thorpe and Young, 2018). Hence, small samples can be used in studies. In this study, a small sample of five group interviews and nine individual interviews were sufficient for data collection.

Another feature of IPA is the focus on the researcher's experiences and values and their influence in interpreting participants' narrations (Flowers and Larkin, 2009; Smith and Osborn, 2003). Mauthner and Doucet, (1998: 163) suggest that interpreting and analysis of accounts are where power, and privilege are and where ethical considerations are most

critical because of the ‘invisible nature of the interactive process’. Therefore, the researcher must ensure that they maintain participants’ voices and represent them in ways that align with their lives, cultures, and contexts. As a Zimbabwean-British woman whose interests in the study were informed by my personal experiences, I am aware of how my experiences, knowledge and class multiply and create contradictory positions for me in how I interpret the women’s accounts and present their experiences. My position and role in the research process are discussed later in the chapter.

Although, IPA was used, I recognise the challenges in its use in qualitative research (Van Manen, 2017; Willig, 2009; Zahavi, 2019). Zahavi (2019) argues that the first-person narrations of a phenomenon do not necessarily make the study phenomenological without fully detangling, clarifying and articulating structures and components implicit in the social world that define and shape individuals’ experiences of that world. Departing from Zahavi (2019), I suggest that this study explores these implicit structures by also exploring the gendered socio-cultural beliefs, norms, state policies and migration processes that have shaped the women’s experience and how they position themselves within these structures and processes.

4.3.2. Analysis of Focus Group Interviews

Palmer et al. (2010) IPA protocol was employed because it considers the factors that are important to feminist study in the analysis process. These factors include context within which the study is conducted and the power dynamics amongst the participants and with the researcher. The women’s accounts from the group interview was translated into English

and transferred onto Excel sheets and the sheets were divided into eight sections based on the protocol. The analysis started by looking at each transcript and read several times. Smith, Jarman and Osborn (1999) suggest that re-reading the transcript helps the researcher become more intimate with the data and new insights are revealed. I then identified quotes from the transcripts that aligned with the eight steps with each transcript. Each stage required the researcher to identify the emerging theme, with final superordinate themes and sub- themes being identified at the end. Themes were identified based on their relevance to the research questions. After data analysis, all general themes from each group were grouped together in a table, these superordinate themes were then reduced to main themes (see Appendix, J, Table 4 for themes from each group). I recognise that these themes are based on one possible account of their experiences and they do not cover all aspects of the participants' experiences and are my subjective interpretation of the participants' lives.

The themes were then compared and merged into final superordinate themes and sub-themes (Table, 5.1) Subthemes that supported the main themes were then identified and grouped together under each superordinate theme. Themes from the focus group interviews helped with exploring other areas of women's experiences in the individual interviews. Below (Table 5.1) are the final superordinate and sub-themes from the group interviews.

Table 5.1

Group interviews: Superordinate and sub-themes

| Superordinate theme | Sub-theme |
|---|--|
| Culturally accepted Zimbabwean woman narrative | <p>Typical African woman - Ascribed, gendered and socially positioned cultural identities.</p> <p>African woman defined by culture-gender roles.</p> <p>Motherhood as part of cultural identity.</p> <p>Impact of colonisation, culture, and globalisation on cultural identities.</p> |
| Changing family dynamics | <p>Motherhood: Child discipline and loss of control.</p> <p>Non-acceptance of domestic abuse.</p> <p>Changing gender roles.</p> <p>Lack of extended family for support.</p> |
| Belonging and non-belonging | Loss of identity. |

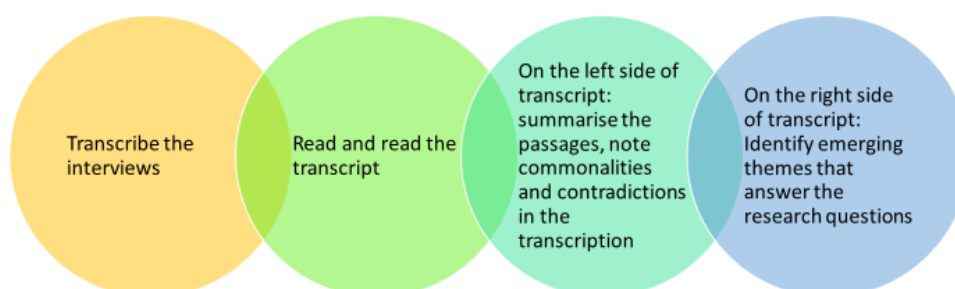
| | |
|--|--|
| | <p>Experiences of immigration.</p> <p>Women's bodies as sites of contestation.</p> |
| Socio- cultural resources to maintain cultural identity | <p>Social networks.</p> <p>Food.</p> <p>Cultural values and music.</p> |

4.3.3. Analysis of Semi-structured Interviews

In this section, I will discuss the use of standard IPA in the analysis of the individual interviews and how superordinate themes and sub-themes were identified and grouped together for the nine participants. Similar to group interviews, I translated some of the interviews from Shona into English before analysis. Transcripts were transferred onto Excel sheets and numbered. I used Smith (1996) and Smith, Flowers, and Larkin (2009) standard process of analysing semi-structured interview. Diagram 1, below is a summary of the stages of IPA for individual interviews, which differs from group analysis.

Diagram 1

IPA Smith (1996)'s stages of analysis for individual interviews



In the analysis of the narrations, I noted any important points, summaries, and connections on the left side of the transcript. This step of the analysis is important to the analytic process, as it helped to understand and interpret what the participant was trying to say and noting contradictions and similarities in the texts with other areas of the interview. After this process, on the right side of the margins, I began to note any emerging themes that would answer the research questions. This process was repeated for every transcript, as suggested by Smith, Jarman and Osborn (1999), who proposes that analysing individual interview at a time, helps the researcher fully engage with each data set. (See Appendix, I for an example of the analysis of individual accounts). The data was then shared with participants to ensure that they were happy with how I had interpreted the data. Only two participants responded and were happy with the analysis. The rest of the participants did not respond to the request. The themes were then grouped together in a table for each participant. Following on, patterns of commonality among the transcripts were then noted

to establish the superordinate themes and sub-themes. The themes were then integrated into main themes and sub-themes (See Appendix K, Table 5 for individual themes and sub themes).

Final Superordinate themes and sub-themes

To derive the final superordinate themes and sub-themes, themes from all the data were compared and common themes and sub-themes were identified. But there were themes that were identified in individual interviews that were not found in the focus group interviews. For example, migration journey and geographical locations and their meanings were found in the individual interview themes and not the group interviews. This is because the individual interviews provided a space for the participants to talk about their lives in Zimbabwe before migration, a discussion which was not conducive within the groups, as it may have been uncomfortable and deter them from participating. Additionally, issues of class and place identities were not explicitly discussed in the group interviews, however, in the individual interviews, some women shared their views and experiences of class and impact of place on their identities.

Another difference between the sets of data was the use of different phrases the women shared about how they defined themselves. Some used the term, 'real Zimbabwean woman' and others used 'the typical African' woman. These themes were combined under the same superordinate theme. The final superordinate themes and their sub-themes were then reworded to encompass all the elements from the themes. Table 5.2 below represents the final superordinate themes and sub themes that constitute the following chapters.

Table 5.2

Final superordinate and sub-themes

| Superordinate theme | Sub-themes |
|--|---|
| 'Musha mukadzi': Colonial, cultural, and religious influences on women's identities | <p>Gendered identities and the 'typical African woman' dominant narrative</p> <p>Colonialism, class, and identity</p> <p>Production and reproduction of cultural beliefs and norms.</p> |
| Contested narratives of belonging: fragmentation of cultural identities | <p>Negotiating belonging and (un)belonging in the diasporic space</p> <p>'Where is the woman': gender and embodiment.</p> <p>Westernisation and the cultural impact of the diasporic space.</p> <p>Religious spaces: Gendered identities and women's bodies.</p> <p>Social networks and redefining relationships.</p> |
| Reconfiguring the family dynamics | <p>Gender relations: changing social positionings</p> <p>The role of extended family across transnational spaces</p> <p>Parenting in-between- spaces.</p> |
| Symbolic practises and markers of culture. | <p>Language as part of cultural heritage</p> <p>Cultural values and material practise of identity</p> |

4.4. Positioning Myself in the Research Study

In this section, I will firstly, examine how my ethical values were important to the research process, and the impact of these values on knowledge production. Secondly, I will reflect on how the multiple identities I assumed during the various contexts impacted the research process. Reflexivity is important to hermeneutic phenomenology and feminist knowledge on the researcher's ethical values in the research process (Collins, 2003). The researcher must acknowledge their position of power based on various categories and its impact on the research process (Chilitsa and Ntseane 2010; Collins, 1991; Gunaratnam, 2003). Usher (1996:36) defines reflexivity as 'the activity of the knower influencing what is known'. Additionally, it is also about the researcher reflecting on how the research process has affected and transformed them as individuals and researchers (Wilkinson, 1988).

There are two types of reflexivity, personal and epistemological reflexivity (Willig, 2001). I will discuss personal reflexivity first followed by epistemological reflexivity. Personal reflexivity involves the various ways that the researcher's personal, political values, beliefs and experiences impinge upon the research process (Collins, 2003; Letherby, 2003; Lewis, 2004; Sprague, 2016). I located myself as a Zimbabwean - British woman looking for help with my study, however, some participants located me as an 'all knowing' expert which some participants found intimidating and they worried over what they could share. Therefore, some of the conversations with potential participants were about reassuring them that they were not being tested and I was not expecting certain responses.

On reflection, as a mother of a fifteen-year-old who understands Shona (my Zimbabwean language) but does not speak the language. I felt guilty and ashamed that I did

not teach my son my language and culture, the interviews were therapeutic as they helped me to reflect on that guilt. Talking to other mothers who felt the same way made me realise that I was not alone, and there was still time and opportunities for me to teach him. The research journey also challenged my own cultural identity and how I self-identify. In this thesis is the first time, I have self-identified as a Zimbabwean – British, a self-identification I am still getting used to. So, personally, the research process has been a journey of self – affirmation.

Part of feminist research is the ethics of caring and empathy (Collins, 2003). Collins (2003) argues that caring and empathy helps to break down power dynamics, as the researcher also shares their experiences and emotions with a participant. I agree with Collins on the importance of empathy. I observed that sharing my experiences of divorce and struggles as a single parent helped Chipso open up about her experiences and was able to share our experiences of the emotional turmoil we had experienced. After the interview, Chipso felt that the interview process was therapeutic for her, as it allowed her to reflect on her experiences and make sense of the alienation she felt after the divorce.

Though ethics of caring and empathy may help break down power hierarchies, other feminist scholars argue that the researcher – participant relationships is complex, multi-dimensional and power dynamics shift within various contexts (Franks, 2002; Reynolds, 2005). Shifting positionalities and locatedness are also based on social relationships governed by culture (Finlay and Gough, 2003; Gunaratnam, 2003). During the research process, as a Zimbabwean Shona woman, I understood the importance of cultural rules on social relationships. The idea of seniority and age as categories of gender organising in African cultures is also reproduced in the research process (Oyewumi, 2002). My aim was to

respect my participants and break down power hierarchies, based on my position as a researcher. Indeed, interviews with older Zimbabwean women were governed by cultural rules of seniority based on age. Thus, as a younger woman, the older women treated me like their child and in turn, I was not able to ask certain questions out of respect for them. This may have impacted the depth to which certain topics were discussed, disentangling myself from participant expectations and my expectations was a difficult challenge. Additionally, in my study, I use respectful titles for older women, as these were titles, they used themselves when interacting with each other and it is what is also expected culturally. For example, I use 'Mai', meaning Mrs and 'Gogo', meaning grandmother as that is the way they were introduced to me during the interviews.

In the individual interviews, it was also challenging as the women expected that I would also share my experiences in Zimbabwe and the UK. In some instances, my opening about my experiences led some of the participants to open about their experiences as well. Thus, the narrative became a co-construction between the researcher and the participants. I also suggest that the co-construction of knowledge between the participant and the researcher can be like a dance between the two. I call it a dance because the participants act differently and share what they think the researcher may want to hear and the researcher may realise what the participant are doing and make attempts to get the participant to talk about their actual experiences of the phenomenon. Therefore, the accounts the researcher collects, may not be reflective of the participant's actual experience (Descombe, 2002). During the individual interviews, some of the participants were not keen to share their marital problems and challenges in their relationships and instead, presented

their relationships in positive ways only. After I shared my experiences, they then revealed the challenges they were facing.

Collins (2003) further notes that reflexivity is essential constituent of the research process, especially, for scholars who are women of colour researching other women of colour. Kanuha (2000), defines insider researcher as one who researches with a population or group of which they are a member. Membership can be from sharing interests, the same language, shared culture, or experiences of a phenomenon. The shared membership then gives the researcher some legitimacy, privilege, and acceptance. The insider-outsider position is a complex relationship, as my perceived privileged position of being an insider had its disadvantages in the research process. class, education level and other factors took precedent over gender, race and language and created boundaries with some of the women. These multiple identities intersected in interactions with the women, with some identities being made salient at different times and spaces. For example, when I was interviewing Christians, I also mentioned by own religious beliefs. However, when I interviewed the political group, my political affiliation was made less prominent as it was in contradiction to the group. Hence, other identities, i.e. gender and immigration journey became prominent. Ramazanoglu and Holland (2011) also note that recruitment challenges may have an impact on sample size, and who takes part. In this study, the challenges I faced in recruitment meant that I recruited participants from across England.

The second type of reflexivity is Epistemological (Willig, 2001). This is about the researcher engaging with questions on how the research question and boundaries limited the findings and understanding of the research phenomenon. Additionally, it is about reflecting on how the design of the study and data analysis affected the research findings

and how the study could have been done differently (Burr, 2005; Willig, 2001). An analysis of the theoretical framework and how the study could have been done differently is discussed in the Thesis conclusions chapter.

IPA requires the researcher to interpret the data and identify emerging themes and my experiences, knowledge of Zimbabwe and some cultures informed how I analysed the data. Although knowledge of the culture is advantageous in the analysis of the data, however, Hood, Mayall and Oliver (1999) note that a researcher can over-interpret the data or overlook some aspects of the data if they are a member of the group they are researching. Being a Zimbabwean may negatively impact how I analysed the data, as I may over-interpret the data based on my own cultural experiences of the phenomenon, which an outsider would see as significant.

4.5. Conclusion

Focus group and semi-structured interviews were appropriate for the study because they help to highlight the dynamics of the women's relationships and identities and how they are socially constructed within a specific context, space, and time. My experiences as a researcher show that not only, does culture and historical context shape cultural identities, but also shapes the researcher- participant relationships when both are from the same countries and share similar cultural values and beliefs. My understanding of the culture and how cultural expectations inform relationships means that my interaction with the other women was constrained cultural expectation of respect for older participants where the power was shifted in their favour.

The notion of interviews as dialogues or conversations with the participants was essential to the women, who were already seeing me as one of them and expected that I would share my life story with them too. Thus, the narratives of the women were co-constructed between the researcher and the participants. However, not all participants were willing to be vulnerable, as some of the women were very guarded when they shared their experiences. In the following chapter, I discuss the theme in detail and use the women's narrations to support the findings.

Chapter 5

‘Musha mukadzi’- Colonial, Cultural, and Religious Influences on Women’s Identities

One of the main findings of the study is that the women’s cultural identities are gendered, ascribed by culture and the women narrated their identities in essentialist ways. This chapter goes to answering the research question on the factors that have contributed to the women’s construction of their cultural identities in the diaspora space. The women employ stereotypical cultural scripts of the typical African woman or real Zimbabwean woman when sharing experiences of their gendered lives both in Zimbabwe and in Britain. In this chapter, I will examine how the gendered cultural scripts and socio-cultural processes have shaped the women’s gendered identities in England. A specific discussion on the typical African woman dominant narrative is essential to contextualise how the women’s gendered, ascribed cultural identities are contested in the diaspora and the socio-cultural resources the women employ to conform or resist this dominant narrative and (re) construct their cultural identities in the diaspora. The premise of this analysis is that cultures are social constructs that are produced through everyday interactions. I use ‘musha mukadzi’ a Shona idiom meaning that a woman makes a home to problematise the women’s accounts of their gendered cultural expectations, and how some women may interpret cultural scripts to define their cultural identities in positive ways. Musha mukadzi as a normative discourse is about how Zimbabwean gendered identities and relations are deeply enmeshed with cultural, colonial, religious ideals which sets out how women ought to live, and which is then used to distinguish ‘respectable’ women from the ‘unrespectable’ ones. However, Musha

mukadzi as a lived experience is also appropriated as a form of resistance to the dominant assumption that men are the primary providers for the families. One could argue that in the diaspora as well as in rural and urban areas in Zimbabwe women have been de facto heads of the households/ providers for their families, but their hard work has been made invisible.

The chapter is divided into three sections:

The first section, Gendered identities and the typical African woman dominant narrative is an analysis of the participants' narrations about how they define a Zimbabwean woman. The findings show that the participants' cultural identities are socially, culturally, and historically constructed. A patriarchal culture ascribes and inscribes certain cultural values and beliefs that the women must adhere.

The second section, Colonial legacy: class, gender and identity are an examination of how racial segregations created gendered places and spaces differentiated by class. These class dissimilarities reinforced through colonial policies and control of women's movement embodiment created notions of respectable and unrespectable woman that was used as a standard to measure women's worth.

The third section, Production and reproduction of gendered cultural beliefs and practises explores some of the ways through which the women internalised the gendered cultural expectations and interpreted them in ways they found restrictive and oppressive. The individual interviews provided an opportunity to deconstruct the women's experiences and identify ways through which the colonial narrative of the African woman and cultural symbols and beliefs are produced and reproduced within the family, social and public

spaces, such that they still impact on the women today. In the following section, I will start by examining how the gendered dominant narratives shaped the participants' lives.

5.1. Gendered Identities and the Typical African Woman Dominant Narrative

In this section, I attempt to deconstruct the participants' narration of how culture shaped their identities and controlled their behaviours. Additionally, I will show how cultural beliefs and norms, shaped by colonial discourses and African Christian beliefs and practises are continuing to influence how the women define themselves and their relationships. I also recognise that the Zimbabwean women are not passive recipients of social, economic, and political processes, instead, they participate in the negotiation and reproduction of gendered cultural scripts that have shaped their identities.

The participants used the phrase, typical African woman and real Zimbabwean woman when making a comparison between what was expected of them and how they defined themselves. Grace, a Psychotherapist, who comes from a middle-class family is asked about how she identifies herself as someone who has lived her life in England, since her early twenties:

'I say to guys as well, if you want a typical Zimbabwe woman, that's not me!'

It is interesting that Grace's narration of her life was based on her relationships to others, including her family, friends, and dating. I asked her to explain what a typical African woman looked like and she responded:

'Typical Zim woman in my mind [is] a woman who has no opinion! Who says, yes to whatever the guy says! Who allows the guy to dictate her life, whose role in her eyes is to be a wife

or to be a mother or who doesn't have any sort of...? She's not defined by her own mind. But she's defined by the cultural norms, of society. So, what society considers her to be, is what's she becomes. It's like the mind is cut off and she can't think, or relate or question some of the cultural attributes, but goes with, that's what we do, and that's what we do.'

Grace's account of a typical African woman who is oppressed, has no agency to challenge the ascribed identities is also reflected in Dee's account. She shares her perception of the typical African woman, when she talks about her ex-fiancé:

'I refuse to meet a man who wants me to behave like a typical African woman, because I am not a typical African woman. So, right, I will go back to my ex fiancé, when I dated my ex finance, I was not a typical African woman and he craved a typical African woman, and his sisters just used to say you are dating an immature woman. They said, you need a real African wife and he dated one. One that would say, daddy how was your day? You know? The one that would cook for him and bring a dish for the husband to wash his hands before food. She would then have his clothes ironed and he wouldn't know where the washing machine or stove is. You know, that's a typical African woman.'

A comparison of Grace and Dee's accounts of the typical African woman shows the similarities of the characteristics of a typical African woman. For both participants, the typical African woman, is one who is characterised by her role and positioning to a man, where she is there to serve the husband. Grace emphasises the woman's role by discussing a Shona custom, where a woman bows before her husband with a wash basin so, he can wash his hands before eating. Although she uses the custom to highlight the woman's role and social location, I argue that the custom of kneeling is also a sign of respect and not only between husbands and wives, but respect that is given to people based on age, social position and familial relationships. The issue of women's gendered roles and social positioning was also discussed in the DAR group, Chikindo noted that:

'For you to be a real Zimbabwean woman whatever that means, means you have no voice, you cater to your husband and in-laws then your kids. Your own family might even disappear into oblivion because you are married in someone's family.'

Chikindo's excerpt was a response to a question on the women's lives as Zimbabwean women in the diaspora space. Her response starts with the expectations that are put on the

women, for one to be a real Zimbabwean woman. I suggest that her confusion with not knowing what the real Zimbabwe woman and then following on to describe the qualities of a woman, indicate that the cultural expectations are ones that are assigned to women, even when they may not subscribe to those expectations. The qualities she expresses are based on women's multiple roles within the husband's family. I suggest that the focus on the husband's family at the detriment of the woman's family maybe a result of the marriage process, that involves bride wealth, where the woman moves to the men's family, geographically and symbolically (see Tamale, 2006). Vimbai agrees with Chikindo and shared her views on the roles of a Zimbabwe woman, including her qualities. She notes:

'A Zimbabwean woman is a wife, mother, hard worker, and daughter -in - law, [she is] all labels.'

June in the same group also adds:

'In Zimbabwe, a woman puts everyone else and everything else above her own happiness in the name of culture'.

The women's extracts are about a Zimbabwean woman who is self-sacrificing to her detriment. Her identity is tied to social roles as a wife, mother, and daughter in law. She is expected to conform to the gendered cultural expectations that privilege the man. But, Zimbabwean feminist narratives of the role of women in Zimbabwe's history and post – independent government is replete with accounts of how women negotiated and compromised with patriarchal and colonial systems to their benefit (Mlambo, 2014; Essof, 2013).

The notion of the typical African woman is a contested narrative, that is central to African Feminists debates (Akin-Aina,2011;Sylvester, 1995). Oyewumi (2000) argues that the 'typical African woman does not exist, Instead the narrative is a creation of colonial

systems of oppression and African patriarchy to disempower, subjugate and control women (see also Mohanty, 1991; Ogundipe-Leslie 1994). Moreover, Tamale (2006) adds that the African woman that is characterised by timidity, oppression and is there to serve the man is a result, not only of colonialism, but also post-colonial experiences, traditional and cultural narratives and religious practises that define women's embodiment. In her seminal work on African feminism and critical transformations Ogundipe- Leslie (1994) argues that the homogenised view of African women is based on colonialism and the idea of 'rural Africa', an approach that dismisses, class, education, ethnicity and sexuality. She further adds that the 'rural Africa' is where 'that pristine, undifferentiated, ahistorical mass of 'real' African women inhabit' (Ogundipe – Leslie, 1994:10). The idea of a pristine African woman was also evident in some of the participants' accounts when they shared their views of the changes that were happening in Zimbabwean women diaspora's lives. I will discuss these changes and the women's response to them in the following chapter.

Additional to the notions of the typical African woman, being subservient to male authority, I am going to use Mai Ndlovu's description of a Zimbabwean woman to demonstrate some of the elements that were common to the participants' descriptions and discussions on being a Zimbabwean woman in the diasporic space. I use Mai (meaning Mrs) as a form of respect and how the women called each other. In RRM group, Mai Ndlovu, an immigration translator, summarised what being a Zimbabwean woman meant to her by saying:

'A woman from Zimbabwe is a woman who comes from Zimbabwe, speaks one of the Zimbabwean languages and has a culture that is deep-rooted from Zimbabwe. (the other women agree)'. Moreover, she has a culture, deep-seated culture from Zimbabwe. Our culture from Zimbabwe is that a woman is under the headship of her husband. A woman has no power over her husband. A bride price is paid for a woman, unlike other cultures, where the women pay the bride price for the man, our men pay the bride price for us'.... but it is expected that the men pay lobola

for us, then we go and live with the men.... We are expected as a wife culturally to have children who will become a heritage, who carry the name further and most of the time. We are expected to have sons, because girls get married and leave home and won't keep the name going.'

The extract by Mai Ndlovu encompasses the overall discussions in the groups. Firstly, Mai Ndlovu shared that a Zimbabwean woman was from Zimbabwe and speaks one of the languages. I propose that the notion of coming from Zimbabwe also entails issues of roots and ancestry because during the individual interviews, questions on where participants came from in Zimbabwe were met by further questions, for example, Dee asked:

'I'm from Eastlea, but are you talking about the village?

When asked the same question, Ruvimbo also notes:

'I come from Murehwa, but I grew up in Harare.'

In contrast, Eli in the individual interviews shares her discontent with not having a rural home:

'So, I missed life in the rural areas. I don't have Zimbabwean village roots, if you know what I mean.... So, I've only been to the village to visit my mom's side of the family, but for father's side, we don't have one.'

It is interesting to note that the rural village that Eli discusses emerged out of colonial racial segregation in Zimbabwe. Over the years, rural settlements have taken on new meanings tied to roots and ancestry. Additionally, national identity cards were required for all Zimbabweans as a form of controlling their movement and the colonial administrators used the rural settlements as markers of identity (Mlambo, 2014). These identity cards are still being used today as part of national identity. I propose that the issue of rural roots, and belonging is representative of what is argued by Mama (1995; 6) to be 'identities that emerged out of repression and resistance...where black people sought to redefine themselves and their cultures positively'. Though Mama (1995) is exploring Black British

identities I suggest that the same argument applies to black Zimbabweans as they also historically faced slavery, racism, and oppression.

Additional to representations of the rural areas, Identity and belonging in independent Zimbabwe was based on one's 'ancestral origins', i.e. black people who lived in Zimbabwe before colonial rule (Mlambo, 2014). Jenkins (2014) notes that identity and belonging are about how individuals rely on explicit active processes of identification with a group or a national collective (see also Anthias, 2002; Weedon, 2004). Eli struggled due to not having patrilineal roots, which impacted her sense of identity and belonging. Hence, she felt like she was not fully Zimbabwean. The lack of a rural home for Eli's father was because her grandparents migrated from Malawi to Zimbabwe, in the 1960s. As discussed in chapter 2, during the 1950s/1960s, industrialisation and increased demand for Agricultural goods and minerals, saw an increase in regional migration to Zimbabwe as other Africans sought employment within the Agriculture and mining. Yet, after independence in 1980, minority groups, such as Mozambicans, Malawians, Zambians and their descendants were alienated and suffered discrimination and exclusion (Mlambo, 2014; Raftopoulos and Mlambo, 2008).

In her account of a Zimbabwean woman, Mai Ndlovu further used, deep rooted culture of a Zimbabwean woman as part of her identity. I suggest that her use of the phrase 'deep-rooted culture' demonstrate the intrinsic nature of culture to identity, gender conceptualisation and social relationships. Mai Ndlovu's description of the gendered positions and power hierarchies between the husband and wife can argued to be based on the nuclear family, an antithesis to an African family (Muchabaiwa, 2017; Oyewumi, 2000; 2002). In her work on feminist conceptualisation of the family, Oyewumi (2002) argues that in African cultures, the family is not defined within the nuclear family only, instead, the

nuclear family is a construction of Eurocentric approaches to gender, gender relations. I suggest that Mai Ndlovu's account of the family and the role of women views gender as a natural category of power hierarchy that subsequently justifies specific division of labour and women's social location. This power hierarchy that is based on gender was also reflected in June's narration, AFG group:

'In our culture, the men are the head and the woman are under him. He goes out to work and takes care of the family, and she takes care of the home.'

June's excerpt illustrates gender hierarchies within marriage, division of labour and the separation of the private and public spaces. The notion of the African woman who is assigned the domestic sphere is challenged by African feminists, like Ogundipe-Leslie (1994); Oyewumi (2000; 2004). They argue that the privileging of nuclear family over kinships relationships leads to a misunderstanding of women's status and power. Nevertheless, the idea of the man being the head of the house as stated by Mai Ndlovu was not reflected in the narrations of some participants like Eli who shared the dynamics in her family:

'I had always seen my mother being the boss, although the women were very much in charge, the men were always there, you know what I mean? and up to now my mother is still very influential in both families and, now that we have grown up, we had to say, let us make our own decisions.'

Eli's narration of her life in Zimbabwe was about how women like her mother were very influential in decision-making in the family. Her mother was a businesswoman and made the decisions in the family. Her example demonstrates that gender power hierarchies are not always based on the man being the head of the family and some women do not conform to the gendered cultural expectations. It is also important to note that the Mai Ndlovu's narration of her culture and gender relations is rooted in heterosexual relationships. Interestingly, during recruitment, I had discussions on Facebook with potential participants, one of them, Lynn asked:

'I think, we have some lesbian unions in Zimbabwean society too. Where do you place those? Do you want to hear from them too?'

Lynn's question on gender and womanhood is not only pertinent to the research, but also how gender and womanhood is conceptualised in Zimbabwe. Homosexuality is illegal in Zimbabwe and considered a new phenomenon that is a result of western influences (Tinarwo and Pasura, 2014). Moreover, such views have been encouraged by religious leaders and former president of Zimbabwe Robert Mugabe, who likened gays and lesbians as worse than dogs. African Feminists, McFadden (2003) and Tamale (2006) also faced severe retribution for supporting the rights of gays and lesbians in African countries including Zimbabwe. On a personal level, the question also challenged my assumptions about heterosexuality as the norm and assumptions about gender within the Zimbabwean context. Nevertheless, none of the participants disclosed their sexuality during the interviews.

Mai Ndlovu also shared about the marriage process with the man paying 'bride wealth' and the woman then living with the man and his family. 'Bride wealth' is a cultural practise in the Shona and Ndebele customs, where bride wealth (roora/ lobola) is paid by the groom and his family as a token of appreciation of the bride's family and building of relationships between the two families (Mawere and Mubaya, 2014; Nzira, 2011). When Mai Ndlovu talked about paying 'bride wealth', Mai Nkomo, shouted out:

'We don't live- in with men (other agree loudly and laugh), we don't do cooking pots (kuchaya mapoto).'

The women were keen to emphasise that culturally, women did not cohabit with men, yet cohabitation is not a new phenomenon in Zimbabwe. Research that shows that kuchaya mapoto has always existed because of colonial legislation that controlled movement of

black people's gender relations (Hungwe, 2006; Pasura, 2008). Furthermore, the HIV/AIDS pandemic, economic decline and migration has transformed the Zimbabwean family, payment of bride wealth and marriage unions. Research on Zimbabwean families in the diaspora show that Zimbabweans were creating new forms of relationships that did not include bride wealth or any form of marriage ceremony (Pasura, 2008; Tinarwo and Pasura, 2014). I suggest that when the women highlighted that they did not cohabit with men, they were critiquing other Zimbabwean diaspora women, who are cohabitating with men for various reasons.

Mai Ndhlovu also noted that children are important to marriage and there is an expectation that the couple will have children, especially sons that would inherit the family name. In the Theory chapter, I highlighted how children are central to the Shona and Ndebele marriages and the role of Christian missionaries in reinforcing women's reproduction over their production, thus, assigning them to the domestic space (Gonese, 2010; West, 2002). Mai Ndlovu's account highlights some of the key features that informed earlier African feminist debates and critiques of western feminism. Debates on the importance of motherhood to women's cultural identities were fundamental to African feminists, like, Acholonu (1995) who developed 'Motherism' as an alternative to feminism. Motherism emphasized the cultural and religious meanings of motherhood to women's identities (Akujobi, 2011; Oyewumi, 2000). However, other African feminists, particularly, Bakare – Yusuf, (2003); Tamale, (2006); Akujobi, (2011) argue that the deterministic approach to African women's reproduction and production reduces women's sexuality to just their reproduction. In this study, motherhood was the avenue through which some participants transmitted their cultures, in the process, reinforced their cultural identities.

Motherhood is further discussed in the following chapter on parenting – in- between cultures, when I examine how the participants negotiated their relationships with their children and the challenges they face as parents in Britain.

Participants also shared their views about their culture, particularly, in the DAR group, the participants used language that demonstrated their frustration with their culture and how it governed their behaviours in ways that sometimes conflicted with whom they felt they were. Preem notes:

[Being] a Zimbabwean woman myself I have realised that whatever I do is mostly governed by culture whatever that is because at times I do not even understand it and my mind is boggled by some things called cultural...'

Although Preem recognises the limitations upon her as a woman, she struggles with defining her own culture nor what constitutes that culture. I suggest that her struggle with understanding her culture, may have come from her disagreement with some of the traditions and expectations place upon her. In contrast to Preem's conflicted feelings about her culture, Shaw's (2015) research with women in Harare (Zimbabwe) found that the women regarded motherhood and their religion to be central to their identities and how they engaged with the world and they did not question their cultural beliefs and norms. Instead, the participants had a 'deep attachment to a perception of themselves as gendered, rather than as generic person' (Shaw, 2015: 126). The tensions between individual choice and assigned social roles was common among the participants. Some participants like Lynn, challenged the women and asked:

'Are there women choosing not to have kids? Is this the same choice they would have made in Zimbabwe? Are there women choosing not to get married? Would they be making the same choices in Zim?'

Mai Zandi responds:

‘Yes, there is more to us than men and children.’ (Others agree and nod their heads).

Lynn’s excerpt demonstrates how identities based on cultural expectations are limiting to women and control women’s choices for their bodies. Essof (2013) notes that the liberation movements and independence in Zimbabwe led women to question gendered roles and the emphasis on reproduction. Women who had the opportunity to study abroad brought with them their knowledges, feminist ideas and experiences which further challenged gender inequalities in the country. The challenge to gender inequalities and focus on reproduction also illustrates how women were not passively conforming to these cultural expectations. The impact of gendered cultural beliefs on the women’s lives and identities is exemplified by Chipo, a successful manager in the banking industry who says:

‘I feel pressure, I feel like there are expectations..... I’m not just a person, and I’m supposed to be somebody’s wife that’s how I am relevant, it doesn’t matter, what I achieved whatever.... I am a Zimbabwean woman. I am someone’s wife, then if I am someone’s wife, then fine, if I am not, then somehow, I lose value.’

Chipo’s narration also illustrates the intersection of gender and culture in reinforcing traditional gender roles, which are then used as a tool to measure women’s worth.

Individuals internalise cultural and social practises that reinforce their cultural identities (Weedon, 2004). Hence, Chipo internalised her cultural and social scripts to measure her worth and these cultural scripts conflict with her sense of who she is, resulting in tensions within herself. Chipo’s narrations also demonstrate how identities based on relationships transcend the individual, their desires, and achievements. This is further highlighted in the diaspora, when the women shared about their lives, which I discuss, in the next chapter.

Although Zimbabwe gained independence in 1980, an analysis of the participants’ narrations demonstrated that racist and classist colonial discourses which shaped their

cultural beliefs on gender and gender relations still pervade the women's lives. An exchange between two participants in DAR group, Dorothy and Dadisai about the differences between diaspora women and those left in Zimbabwean exposes this colonial legacy. Dorothy says:

'A true definition of whom a Zimbabwean is found in the rural areas, where their women do not watch TV, doesn't go to the city to see her husband, yes that woman can give you a true definition of a Zimbabwean woman because she is not corrupted in any way'.

Dorothy uses language that infers that she does not see herself and the others in the group as still being Zimbabwean women. She views the women in the diaspora and those who live in cities in Zimbabwe as 'corrupted' as they have been exposed to western cultural values.

Various scholars have documented Zimbabwean women's history and role in precolonial through to the independence of Zimbabwe, a history that had not been documented before, (see Barnes, 1999; Goredema and Cheater, 1996; Jeater, 1993; Schmidt, 1993). A common theme in these texts and following texts since then is the issue of the divergent ways that women in the rural areas and urban areas were perceived. As I stated earlier in the chapter, the notion of the typical woman is argued to be based on women in the rural areas, who were perceived to be more moral than women working in urban centres. Jeater (1993) argues that the urban areas afforded women opportunities to redefine their cultural identities, but it was in the rural areas, where these identities were contested and challenged. Hungwe (2006) further adds that creation of the rural areas (reserves) separate from the townships and legislated control of women's movement created notions of 'respectable' and 'unrespectable' women. The respectable women were those that were married and participated in Agricultural production and other family duties as required in the rural areas. Thus, Dorothy's account illustrates these notions of respectability and (un)respectability of women based on perceived exposure to western values. The notion of

‘respectability’ is also illustrated in Ruvarashe’s extract when she shared about her childhood in Zimbabwe:

‘[In our family], yes, we had one boy, there are 3 in our family, and there’s one boy. It was different, compared to here, very different. Well, in Zim, what I realised is that girls are expected to appear so dignified, it’s like, you are like supposed to portray a holy image.’

The idea of a ‘holy image’ is about respectability and (un)respectability and its associations with religious images. The notion of being dignified and respectable are also enforced through African Christian practises and women’s groups (Mate, 2002). Mate (2002) conducted research with two urban based Pentecostal women’s groups; Precious Stones Women’s Ministry, part of the Family of God⁵ (FOG) church in Zimbabwe, and Gracious Women’s Ministry, part of ZAOGA⁶ church. She found that the women’s groups emphasised domesticity as evidence of the women’s modernity and faith. Gamuchirai, RRM group also uses an example of rural women to explain gendered roles within the family using the life of a woman in the rural areas:

‘Look at people in the rural areas, they work both men and women and they come back at the same time, but women continue working fending for the men while they rest. I have never understood it. But that is what defines a Zimbabwean woman.’

I argue that although Gamuchirai refers to the rural woman as embodying the real Zimbabwean woman, she and the other participants are unaware of their colonial history and their contribution to the reproduction of the rural woman narrative as exemplifying a real Zimbabwean woman. Additionally, they are not aware of the global political and capitalist processes that have engendered specific roles for women in the rural areas

⁵ Family of God Church is a Zimbabwe independent church started by Dr Wutawunashe and his wife.

⁶ Zimbabwe Assemblies of God Africa (ZAOGA) was founded by Ezekiel Guti, which broke away from the South-African derived Pentecostal church, the Apostolic Faith Mission, in 1959. ZAOGA is also known internationally as Forward in Faith Ministries International (FIFMI),

(Mikell, 1997; Moyo and Kawewe, 2002). For other participants, class was a criterion that separated rural areas from urban centres; high density areas from low density areas and the socio-cultural gendered practises created in these spaces. Zanele was keen to tell me about how her life story and experience of moving from a suburb in Harare to a high-density area in Mabvuku. She shared her experiences and culture shock:

‘We had never been to the place, we didn’t use to visit the place, and we didn’t even visit kumusha. I didn’t even know that there were houses like that!’ ‘And you know the culture shock, in high density, vs living in low density..... When we moved to the high-density area, we had to change everything, the way we viewed things, the way we did things, it was a culture shock to us! Especially, since we didn’t fraternize, or visit relatives. So, imagine moving from low density to high density, and live in a place like Mabvuku and it was not the good part of Mabvuku. So, I used to play hockey, and we used to wear these short gym skirts, and people would follow you, to say, look at what she is wearing’.

Though, Zanele’s story is about internal movement before migration to Britain, she experienced a ‘culture shock’ in Mabvuku, a township dating back to the 1950s. She further emphasised her culture shock, noting that she had never been to the rural areas. Her comparison to the rural areas and Mabvuku, seemed an attempt to convey the difficulties she faced. Raftopoulos and Mlambo (2008) note that during colonial times, high density areas were sites of struggle, control by colonialists and exploitation. I acknowledge that when Zanele expressed the challenges of relocating from low density area to high density area, she asked if I was familiar with the area. It made me uncomfortable, as I had similar experience of visiting old Tafara area (Harare, Zimbabwe) and being shocked at the poor infrastructure, and poverty in the area. I answered her question by referring to my experiences in Old Tafara. My understanding of the areas encouraged Zanele to continue with her story. I have discussed my role in the research process in chapter five.

Zanele’s narration also highlight the intersection of gender and culture in women’s embodiment within gendered spaces and their navigation of those contested spaces. The

criticism she faced on her appearance is important, as it demonstrates the challenges that some of the participants faced in Britain, concerning the way they presented themselves. Anthias (2013) argues that identity and belonging are about spaces and the socio-cultural processes that define these spaces. Uwakweh (2014) further adds that settlement in 'new spaces' and the socio-cultural differences results in tensions and conflicts as the individual negotiate this new terrain. Hence, Zanele changed how she dressed. I further asked Zanele how she had responded to the criticism and she added:

'I still played Hockey, but I would wear tracksuit bottoms.'

Harassment of women because of their clothes is common in Zimbabwe and an issue challenged by women's organisations (Essof, 2013). I suggest that these practises are tied to notions of respectability and contribute to the control of women's embodiment. When narrating her life in the diaspora and the challenges she faced, Zanele used her experiences in Zimbabwe as a lesson that strengthened her settlement in Britain and helped her to address the challenges she faced with her mother in law. I will discuss family reconfiguration in the following chapter. The move to a different place with its own social-cultural processes, led to Zanele and her family to create boundaries of inclusion and exclusion based on class differences. Grace further elaborates on how class is a category of belonging and (un)belonging, when discussing dating in Zimbabwe:

'No, social class is huge! OMG! It defines, where you learnt, whom you associated with, it defined how you spoke, all those things were part of a social class, what you ate at your house.'

She goes further to talk about how social class also determined social interactions and relationships:

'You knew what was expected of you; It was very clear in your head. There were certain guys that you would never ever date. You just know that there are boundaries here (social class), it was

simple as that. It was simple, everyone knew the social standard, and it was ok. We don't go there, and you don't go there, and that's it!

Class and status were important to her identity and was also central to the food, music and the social networks that she and Dee used to reinforce their cultural identities in England.

McGregor's (2008) research with Zimbabwean diaspora in Britain found that the participants lost their status and class positioning they enjoyed in Zimbabwe upon migration. However, for Grace, her social class is what differentiated her from the Zimbabwean diaspora. I will discuss these contestations in the following chapter.

In summary, I have demonstrated how colonialism, certain cultural beliefs and traditions have contributed to the defining of Zimbabwean women and created narratives of the real Zimbabwean woman and typical African woman. I argued that the notion of African woman does not exist, as African women are differentiated by class, cultures, religions, and other factors. However, I suggest that the women are co-constructors of the continued production and reproduction of these gendered stereotypes. These ascriptions cause tensions and conflicts within the women, as they try to redefine their own identities in the diaspora. Place and class also were important to women's cultural identity constructions. Racial segregation and legislated control of women's movement contributed to the redefining of women's cultural identities. Over the years, the rural areas have become part of black Zimbabweans' roots or ancestral home. In the following section, I explore how these cultural beliefs and colonial narratives are produced and reproduced.

5.2. Production and Reproduction of Cultural Beliefs and Social Norms

In this section, I will examine how cultural scripts were reproduced and later in following chapters, analyse how the women create new meanings from their cultural gendered beliefs in redefining their cultural identities in the diaspora space. I utilise the individual accounts to highlight how gendered cultural narratives and practises are internalised, produced and reproduced in everyday practise and after migration continue to impact the women. I have defined culture as constituting meanings that order individuals' behaviour and shapes their experiences (Hall, 1994; Magnusson and Marecek 2012). Additionally, these meanings are created and re-created through social relationships. One of the ways that gendered cultural expectations were reproduced in Zimbabwe was through pressuring women to get married and have children. Vee provides an example of how this is done, when she responds to the women in the group, DAR group were sharing about how their behaviour is dictated by culture. Vee adds:

'It's little cultural norms that condition women to these societal roles start with small things. If you're twenty-five people will start asking you if you have a boyfriend and then when you are married, one year after they start asking when you are going to have a baby without anyone even considering that maybe the woman does not want any of that.'

Vee's narration uncovers the social rules and assumptions on gender expectations that society may share that maybe unchallenged. Yet, Vee is also aware that some women may not want to get married and have children. Pressure to get married and have children was also found in Mate's (2002) research with the women's groups in Zimbabwe. She found that for the participants who struggled to conceive, they felt alienated, marginalised, and guilty for not conceiving. The pressure to marry and have children was also noted by Tinotenda when she starts her narration of life in Zimbabwe:

‘My life in Zim, teenage life, pressures of society to get married early, got married at 20 (nervous laugh) so, I had my first child at 21 and then at 22, we left Zim, and then I got here.’

Due to these pressures, Tinotenda ended up marrying quite young. Samantha also felt the same way when she left high school and could not go to university:

‘The only option is marriage, if you can’t go to college or university, you are expected to get married.’

These quotes demonstrate how society puts pressure on women to get married and have children and the women have internalised these beliefs and values as their own. Another method through which gendered cultural norms and traditions are maintained is through control and punishment of non-conformity. Grace provides an example of how cultural values and social norms are transmitted to children and how parent-child relationships are maintained:

‘I remember having a difficult relationship with my mom, even till now, you know, I remember the one time, I was thirteen, she had told me to do something, and I questioned her about it, like why? Oh! The woman slapped me, she literally slapped me! I jumped on the bed. She jumped on the bed with me, and she slapped me! (Laughs). I remember, in a weird way, like traumatic experiences. That's the only time, she ever slapped me, and that was the only time, looking at it, and then I tracked it in therapy, and that's the time, I learned to be silent, and not to ask questions, because that's the sort of culture, that you grow in, you don't ask. You just accept it, what is said is the final word. That's the sort of culture that you grow up in.’

Grace's experiences with her mother is an example of the ways through which cultural expectations and conformity is enforced. Oheneba-Sakyi, and Takyi (2006) note that African traditions and cultural practises prescribe roles for family members and these traditions have internal mechanisms for punishments of non-conformity. Grace learnt to be silent and not ask questions. Silence and acceptance were a theme that were embedded in the women's narrations of the dominant narrative of the ‘African typical woman’ and the ‘real Zimbabwean woman’. Issues of silence and conformity were also raised by Chipso who adds:

'I think our culture stops us from saying things as well.... you know, even giving our opinion, it doesn't matter, whether it's within a marriage or anywhere, even within families.'

Goduka (2000) suggests that in Southern African cultures, the issue of 'ubuntu', is an African philosophy that is about the collective, thus, 'I am because we are'. He further argues that although the collective supersedes the needs of the individual, the individual can still flourish. The participants' narrations contradict these arguments, as the participants felt that they were denied agency and individuality for the good of the collective, which built resentment and resistance. Kolawole, (2002) further argues that culture and gender are intricately intertwined, and some cultural practises and ideologies work to silence women and keep them contained in specific spaces. Therefore, I suggest that when the women settle in Britain, they can redefine their cultural identities away from these constraints and punishments for non-conformity. Ruvarashe, employed in the Care industry and a mother of four, provides a detailed narration of how cultural expectations and cultural control also impacted her sense of identity and caused contention with her mother:

'I think, in my family, my mom would say, I'm the only child with a problem, because, from a young age, I was very outspoken, the thing is, they just didn't understand me, because, I wanted to know, because some things are like unspoken, you should just accept them like that, but I had this question why? And it's like, I'm told I'm not allowed to ask that. It would make me angry. Instead, I would rebel and push the boundaries.'

Davis, Evans and Lorber (2006) note that cultural norms that determine behaviour and social interactions cause continual tensions between women's choices to do as they please and the social pressure to conform to gender norms that reinforce inequality. Ruvarashe's extract also demonstrates how she challenged those gendered expectations and rebelled against them to redefine her cultural identity. She further adds:

'I remember, like at twenty-one, I went out after work; I went to a movie that used to start at five and it would finish at 7. I got home, around 8, and my mom was questioning me about being late, because normally, I would be home, by 6:30. My mother made it very clear that she was not happy! However, I was like; I'm 21, and I have been working since I was 18, so, I didn't know what

the problem was and then it so happened that my brother the following week, wanted to take his girlfriend out for a movie. And he wanted to take her for the 8:30 movie, and being someone who is outspoken in our family, I questioned my mom, like how come you are giving him permission. She was not happy, and I was told off in such a way that I had said something that should never be spoken.'

Such experiences made Ruvarashe question the different ways society through culture controls women:

'It's like, you can't question this area, boys can do whatever they want to do, but as a girl, you can't, and it's like, I'm told, I'm not allowed to ask that.'

The extract illustrates the gendered ways through which behaviour is controlled.

Ruvarashe's mother was stricter with her than her brother based on gender. Ruvarashe shares how the constant criticism from her mother about her character and the family meeting with her uncles to discipline her caused her to question her own identity, she says:

'I remember at one point, my mom said; her, I want to take her to her uncles, they need to sit down with her, she talk too much. It hurt me, you know, I used to question, like, what kind of a person am I?'

Her account of the threat of the meeting with her uncles is an example of how extended family are involved in parenting and disciplining of children, especially in Ruvarashe's family where her father died. The differentiated ways that her mother treated them resulted in Ruvarashe questioning her identity and caused tension within herself. Ruvarashe's experiences shows the challenges of an ascribed, gendered cultural identity that does not allow for individual autonomy. Himonga (2016) explored implementation of children's rights in African cultures and argues that within the family, girls may experience inequalities that work to disadvantage them, as they do not have a say in communal matters. He adds that girls can be caught between caught between their rights and need for the benefits of the family. It is also interesting to note that the participants' accounts of discipline and conformity to gendered norms were primarily from their mothers. Other ways through

which gendered social norms were produced was through the preference to educate sons against educating daughters. Chipo shares the pressure on her parents to have sons:

‘Well, my parents wanted a boy (laughter), they kept trying, and my mom lost the fifth one. There were meant to have two that is what my mom told me. They kept trying for one, the fifth one she lost. There was a lot of pressure on my dad from his family in the village to produce boys, even to send to school, and they are like, oh why is he sending girls to school? They are going to end up as prostitutes. You shouldn't educate girls, because they are going to get married and end up benefiting the men's family and all that stuff.’

Chipo's quote reveals how gender and culture intersect in positioning girls within the family which may act to limit their access to resources. Additionally, the benefits of educating girls is viewed through a cultural lens of marriage and benefiting the husband's family. Research by United Nations Education for Girls (July 2018) found that in Zimbabwe, poverty is the biggest barriers to girls' education as parents prefer to send boys to school and girls end up in domestic work and child marriages. I will discuss the challenges to parenting in chapter eight. Though Chipo's father was under pressure to not educate them, Chipo notes that:

‘My dad never paid them any attention. He made sure that it was all he worked for and he didn't pay any mind to relatives.’

Her father's refusal to listen to the family members also showed the autonomy the nuclear family can have to recreate their own values. Although her father chose to educate all his children, her brother still got preferential treatment, she adds:

‘My mom really favoured my brother, and you know, the unfairness of it as well. He went to private schools. We just went to normal high schools. He was in private schools....and we were like, what is so special about him? After all, he is not good at school, and I am. So, I was in this competition with him, I don't know if he knew, but in my head, I was competing with him, and I always wanted to do better than him.’

Chipo was socialised to understand her positioning in the family as a girl. Her attitude and response to the limitations placed on her saw her working hard at school and gaining a university degree. However, at university she felt under pressure to get married:

‘I was married then, oh, yes, that’s another thing, so, university there is a lot of pressure as well.....there was this thing, you marry, there is a lot of pressure for you to be in a serious relationship or married by the time you are in your final year.’

Gendered cultural expectations are not only reinforced within the family institution, but also within institutions like education and the workplace. Mutekwe, Maphosa, Machingambi, Ndofirepi and Wadesango’s (2013) research on social constructions of gender within in a Bindura school (Zimbabwe) found gender bias against girls in the curriculum. They argued that patriarchal values were entrenched in the curriculum and served to limit choices and opportunities for girls after school. Chipo also shares her experiences at university and I use her account to demonstrate how gender intersect with culture even within these spaces. I suggest that these accounts of gendering of public spaces may have contributed to some participants’ feelings of control by their cultures in Zimbabwe. Consequently, they felt a sense of freedom in the diaspora. When pressed for clarification on relationships at university, she responds by saying:

‘Yes, because you will be out of the market. You will be too educated for the guys if you don’t get one from university who is at your level.’

Chipo’s mother had encouraged her to get an education and improve her life, yet she still needed to maintain the man’s higher social positioning as head of the family. Her experiences exemplify the complex social-cultural processes that intersect with gender in women’s social locations and constructions of gendered identities. Another example of women’s social location and how they navigate public spaces is Samantha’s experiences in the workplace in Zimbabwe:

‘So, I started to work when I finished my A ‘levels, and I was 18/19 years. I worked as a secretary and being a woman secretary was difficult, especially in my country because it was prejudiced and (ummmm), I had a lot of passes from my bosses, asking me out and stuff, it was so difficult. I changed jobs, within a short space of a year, I changed jobs four times.’

Martin- Shaw (2015) notes that secretarial work is considered women's work as it entails elements of care associated with women. She adds that working as a secretary with a male manager may endanger the women's reputations as good and respected women; their work may entail closely working with a male colleague, taking orders from them and being under their supervision and control. In her study, she further found that the participants struggled with sexual harassment and for some participants, they felt that men could not control their sexual urges and it was the price that women pay for financial freedom. Samantha and Chipso's narrations are examples of how gender inequality and expectations are pervasive within private and public spaces and women must navigate these barriers if they want to succeed.

In summary, gendered cultural expectations are reinforced with different spaces the women. I also suggest that acceptance of gendered cultural practises in Zimbabwe is transposed to the diaspora where some participants expected women to continue to conform to gendered social roles and notions of respectability.

5.3. Conclusion

The chapter highlighted the complexity of the participants' cultural identities and the influences that have shaped their lives. Colonialism, racial segregation, produced gender identities based on class and gendered social norms. Bakhurst and Sypnorch (1995) argue that outside forces do not only socially construct social identities, but individuals also exercise some agency and autonomy. The women's colonial past also contributed to the construction of the African woman narrative that was produced and reproduced within the family, public and social spaces. The idealised African woman narrative is one that the

women should aspire to and achieve. Conformity to the idealised womanhood was done through, emphasising marriage and children and punishment of any deviation within the family institution and social spaces. The participants learn at a young age, what is expected of them as girls and those cultural expectations are different for boys. The family becomes a system that helps mould their identity based on gender roles.

From the standpoint of the participants, their society ascribes certain behaviours, and expectations on women that makes the individual invisible in this context. In African cultures, the community comes before the individual, communal relationships and needs supersede individual needs and goals. The location of the individual within the communal becomes a space for tensions and conflict, for example, Chipo struggled to establish her identity and views in the family, resulting in conflict with her mother. More importantly, the findings also showed that some of the participants' mothers did not align with the real Zimbabwean woman narrative in their families.

Place and class identity also differentiated the women's experiences and identities. Although the women share about the different places as bounded and distinct, scholars argue that places are fluid and change with time and are a result of socio-spatial practices that define these places which are maintained by specific power relations. The participants were unaware of the effects of racial segregation creation of rural areas, which are considered markers of identity and one's heritage, reconstructions of gender, the family and creation of class and class identities. In the following chapter, I will examine the women's experiences in the diaspora and its impact on their cultural identities and reproduction of gendered cultural scripts that have shaped their identities.

Chapter 6

Contested Narratives of Belonging and the Fragmentation of Cultural Identities

A focus only on the participants' locations within their families does not fully capture the women's complex social locations and experiences within various spaces. In this study, I propose that the women's ascribed, gendered essentialised identities are fractured and the participants respond to this fragmentation in different ways. In this chapter, I examine some of the ways in which the women's ascribed, gendered identities are reconceptualised. Additionally, in Britain, the women are ascribed new labels that are based on race and immigration status. Hence, I examine the effects of the intersection of gender with race, culture, and immigration status on the women's lives and sense of belonging. I specifically focus on the women's sense of belonging within religious spaces and wider British society. The family is an institution that is central to women's gendered lives and is the place where specific cultural practises and traditions are reproduced and contested and as such, I will discuss the family in a separate chapter. The current chapter is a starting point to answering the research question on how cultural identities experienced and renegotiated within personal, religious, and social spaces in the diaspora.

The chapter is divided into three sections.

The first section, negotiating belonging and (un)belonging in the diasporic space explores the factors that contributed to the women's sense of belonging and (un)belonging

in the diaspora, how the participants navigated these spaces and the impact on their gendered cultural beliefs.

The second section, 'Where is the woman': Gender and embodiment examines how the women, as embodied agents with ascribed and inscribed identities, use their bodies in specific ways to negotiate the entanglements of gender, race, culture and religion.

The third section, Social media spaces explores the women's use of Facebook and WhatsApp, where they are members of the women's groups. Though, the groups help the women interact with other Zimbabwean diaspora across the globe, these spaces are also contested, and I examine, how the women also navigate these online platforms.

6.1. Negotiating belonging and (un)belonging in the diasporic space

An analysis of what the diaspora symbolises for the participants is important to understanding how the women (re)construct their identities, reconfigure their spaces and create new belongings. In this study, the women shared their experiences of discrimination and feelings of unbelonging, as a result of their immigration status intersecting with gender and race. Members of AFG group, were keen to share their experiences and the challenges they faced as immigrants, Maria a self-employed mother, simply puts it as:

'MaBritish haatide muno (The British don't want us here).'

Gogo Nyari, a 65-year-old from the same group, who has lived in Britain for more than ten years and still waiting for a decision on her immigration case concurs with Maria and adds:

'We came here with an expectation of a good life, but the environment is different..... You have no peace of mind..... We are not free, a British passport or not'.

Maria and Gogo Nyari's extracts demonstrate their strong feelings of being unwanted and unwelcome. Gogo Nyari, further elaborates on her feelings of unbelonging by using language that frames the diaspora as a place of bondage. I suggest that her immigration status may have contributed to her feelings of bondage due to the limitations placed upon asylum seekers and refugees. Extensive research into asylum seekers and refugees in Britain found that stringent laws on immigration adversely impacted asylum seekers' ability to work and participate in civic activities (Block, 2000; 2008; Cheung and Phillimore, 2014).

Moreover, asylum seekers and refugees were likely to find to work in the irregular labour market and were susceptible to abuse by their employers. Gogo Nyari, further adds that having a British passport did not guarantee one a sense of belonging, therefore, immigration status is not the only factor that may contribute to migrants' feelings of (un)belonging. I suggest that political and social discourses on migrants that locate them as the other and depict them as a problem to be solved contribute to migrants' feelings of (un)belonging. Fazakarley (2017) argues that political and social discourses on migrants contribute to their feelings of (un)belonging, not just to the place but also to the national collective (see also Anthias, 2002; Davis, et al, 2018). Mai Guzha, RRM group clearly expresses the negative discourses on Africans, she responds to my question on how their lives had changed in the diaspora by noting:

'One thing that... i am not being discriminatory, one thing that this world taught us, yeah? Is looking down upon us, when we eat our rats and mice, they think we are so starved and we don't have any food, but they eat their food, snails,(other agree) But in our country, we can't eat a snail....'

Mai Guzha highlights food as an example of the racist social discourses about Africa and Africans. Colonial and post-colonial relationships between Western and African countries have shaped not only African identities but also how Africans are perceived and treated in

the diaspora (Bonsu, 2009; Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2007). Arthur (2010) conducted research with African migrants in the United States of America and argues that ascribed racialized identities also contribute to African immigrants' feelings of (un)belonging and marginalisation, as they are subjected to racism and discrimination due to entrenched negative depictions of Africa and its people. Racial classification led to black Africans being at the bottom of the racial hierarchy and created a duality between primitive, traditional Africans and civilised, western white people (Kanneh, 1998; Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2014). In contrast to this duality created during colonialism, the women's narrations of their experiences in Britain are framed within a duality between African values (perceived as moral and a value to one's life) and western values (perceived as degenerative and amoral). I also note that Mai Guzha's account of choice of food is also generalising her experiences to all British or white people living in Britain, when she talks about 'them' eating snails. Colonial racial hierarchies and racist discourses on Africa and Africans also resulted in different terminologies/ labels used to describe African migrants to Britain (immigrants) and British migrants to Zimbabwe (expatriates). These labels persist today and there are reflected in the political discourse and immigration legislation on African migrants in Britain. Tete Sheila, from RRM group, is a nurse, in her forties who migrated to Britain as a professional and asks a question about these differences:

'Why do they call us immigrants when we come here? It's not all of us, who came here as refugees and asylum seekers, some of us came as professionals. Why is there this margin? (The other agree and nod) when they come to Zimbabwe, they are given good accommodation, they live in expensive houses... but when we come here, we are called immigrants and they are called expatriates.'

Tete Sheila agreed with Mai Guzha by noting the differences between the ways they were being treated as immigrants against the way white British people were treated when they settled in Zimbabwe. I suggest that Tete Sheila's quote is about the historical relationship

and racial inequalities between the British and black Zimbabweans. Thus, the British are expatriates in Zimbabwe and the Black Zimbabweans are (im)migrants in the UK. Tete Sheila further notes how the use of the term immigrant homogenises Zimbabweans in Britain, yet Zimbabwean diaspora in Britain is made up of diverse, plural ethnic groups with a range of socio-economic and immigration statuses. The extract also reveals the impact of the politicisation of immigration and subsequent state policies on migrant identities and feelings of belonging. In curbing immigration and reducing net migration, the government's immigration policies inadvertently created boundaries between the diaspora and wider British society and among migrant groups.

The discontent with being an immigrant is also reflective of the Zimbabwean diaspora's preference for the term diaspora to describe themselves, instead of immigrants, asylum seekers and refugees, as they consider these labels dehumanising and alienating (McGregor, 2010). "Politics of belonging" is a term developed by Yuval Davis (2006; 2010) to describe how migrant identities are constructed. She argues that migrant identities are constructed 'in particular ways to particular collectivities that are, at the same time, themselves being constructed by these projects in very specific ways (Yuval Davis, 2010;266). Migrants are assigned labels by the government which act to define them as a collective and locate them as the other. Based on Yuval Davis' (2010) arguments, I suggest that ascribed labels of 'immigrant', '(failed) asylum seeker' and 'refugee' are part of the political project that defines the participants in ways that reinforce negative stereotypes of migrants in the country and serves a political purpose.

Constructions of migrant identities for by particular bodies for political purposes is also experienced through institutional discrimination and racism. Experiences of racism

were articulated by participant Rufaro, who had been through the immigration system and was willing to share her experiences. I define institutional racism drawing on Murji (2007: 204), who defines it as ‘attitudes and practices that lead to racist outcomes through unquestioned bureaucratic procedures.’ Rufaro is a mother who left her son in Zimbabwe and settled in Britain, to secure work and provide for him. After five years of living and studying in Britain, due to a technicality with her visa renewal, Rufaro found herself in her final year of nurse training without the right to abode in the UK. She narrates her experiences of the tribunal court:

‘There was another lady that was there, who said to me, you want to represent yourself? I hope you are ready for some hard-core questions and she then starts talking about my son. Then, my son was back in Zimbabwe. Then she said, you don’t want to go back to Zimbabwe? You are saying that Zimbabwe is hard now, you are obviously scared! Are you scared? I didn’t know where things were going at this time. so, I said; yes, things are hard, and she said; yet you expect your son to be strong enough to live there and you can’t? And she goes, I wouldn’t treat my dog the way you are treating your son. I was like, right! This is it! I am going to Zimbabwe! I am going to die with my son! Forget about this case.’

Guedes Bailey (2012) conducted research with African women asylum seekers and refugees in Nottingham, exploring how the women create spaces of belonging in Britain, where they face discrimination and exclusion. She found that the women resisted exclusion and oppression by creating their own women’s community group that enabled them to create new belongings and redefine their identities. She argues that these acts of resistance were based on their agency towards changing their lives. By deciding to return to Zimbabwe and being with her son, Rufaro is exercising agency within a space, where the immigration system has the power to decide whether to award her citizenship or to deport her. At the time of the interview, it was four years since Rufaro and her son, had secured their citizenship, and settled in Wolverhampton. Rufaro’s narration exemplifies how migrant women with children may be unduly vilified by a system that does not understand the

choices available to them and the complex decisions they must make for their families. I will discuss parenting in-between spaces in the following chapter.

After the encounter with the tribunal judge and rejection of her appeal, Rufaro voluntarily returned to Zimbabwe. Due to the volatile political situation in 2009, she was treated with suspicion, harassed, and tortured by government forces. These experiences of intimidation are not unique to Rufaro as research on returnees to Zimbabwe, both voluntary and failed asylum seekers, show that they often face detention, torture, hostility and treated like they do not belong (Pasura, 2012; Ranger, 2005). I argue that the female judge and her responses to Rufaro actively participated in the maligning of asylum seekers within the immigration system and their discrimination and exclusion. Rufaro's change in immigration status and the right to live in Britain also illustrates how belonging and citizenship is arbitrary, continually shifting and the tensions between citizenship, belonging, and the politics of belonging in Britain.

Some participants also experienced racism and exclusion within their workplaces. Dorothy from DAR group, shared her views on some of the challenges facing migrant women and how these experiences socially locate women and limit their opportunities:

'It [the UK] is expensive, the weather is cold, and the lack of recognition or professional opportunities and racism makes life in this country unbearable'.

Dorothy's extract illustrates how gender intersects with race in migrant women's experiences of multiple social inequalities. These findings are similar to Tinarwo's (2017) research with twenty-four black Zimbabwean social workers, working in Children, Young People and Families Directorate (CYPFD) of a large local authority in Britain. She found that the participants, mainly women, faced both institutional and everyday racisms which

blocked their chances of promotions. At the time of the interviews, Tinarwo (2017) found that only one female social worker had reached senior level, compared to eight out of fifteen men, who had become senior practitioners. Likewise, Mbiba's (2005) research on the Zimbabwean diaspora in Britain found that the health and Social Care sector provided the Zimbabwean diaspora with opportunities for social mobility, financial stability and independence for women. However, experiences of racism, discrimination and exclusion were also common (see also Bloch, 2006; McGregor, 2008b). It is important to note that even though migrant women face limitations and barriers to promotions within the workplace, employment opportunities for migrants are complex. Research shows that as skilled migrants, women have a higher chance of being employed within their professions than migrant men whose qualifications may not be considered in the same way (Kofman et. al 2015).

In this study, the experiences of racism, discrimination, and feelings of (un)belonging resulted in some participants' desire to return to Zimbabwe. The desire to return to Zimbabwe was strongly articulated by other participants of Gogo Nyari's age. Mai Kwashi, in her sixties, from the same group shares her sentiments:

'This country is not ours; this is not home! We have to come together and use our resources, so we can build Zimbabwe and fix things and go home.'

Mai Kwashi's negative experiences of the diaspora fuelled her feelings of unbelonging and a desire to return 'home' and rebuild the country. Like, Mai Bhachi, Mai Kwashi was an asylum seeker who left her children in Zimbabwe and had not seen them in ten years. I suggest that Mai Kwashi's immigration status and her separation from her children may have contributed to her feelings of unbelonging and a desire to return to Zimbabwe. It is vital to note that the concept of home for Zimbabweans is fractured across 'historical,

spatial, political, racial, ethnic and personal lines, and indeed a multidimensional intersection of all these factors' (Ndlovu, T. 2010: 117). Therefore, I suggest that Mai Kwashi did not miss the geographical place of home, instead, she was alluding to the meanings, relationships and cultural practices associated with these places and spaces. Mai Bhachi agrees with Mai Kwashi and adds:

'it's important for women to get together and support each other to build Zimbabwe, so we can go home, tiende kumba shuwa (so we can go home for sure)'.

Pasura (2008;2010) conducted thirty-three interviews with a diverse group of Zimbabweans, living in various areas of Britain. He found that the participants had varied experiences of the diaspora which differed based on immigration status, socio-economic status, experiences of exclusion and discrimination, resulting in different levels of belongings. The participants' sense of (un)belonging led some participants to plan to return to Zimbabwe and help develop the country. In contrast to Mai Kwashi and Mai Bhachi's views on return, Pasura's (2008; 2010) research found that it was mostly male participants who were investing in Zimbabwe with a view to returning and the women were more invested in a permanent settlement in the diaspora. In this study, I suggest that the differences in findings with the women in this study are a result of a lack of stability. Experiences of exclusion and lack of stability then led the participants to construct the diaspora as a temporal space and Zimbabwe became an 'imagined home' waiting for their return., Therefore, for Mai Kwashi and Mai Bhachi, home is an imagined place of hope and the possibilities within. Notions of home are also contested as demonstrated by some participants who had different experiences of Zimbabwe and definitions of home. Chipso, a participant in the individual interviews, recognised that life in Zimbabwe was no longer the

same as when she left the country and that some of Zimbabwean diaspora had an unreal image of home:

‘I guess it’s typical of migrant communities, that they retain the old traditions of their country. In Zimbabwe, they are ahead, and those things we are trying to maintain are non-existent in Zimbabwe. We are trying to maintain old traditions that no longer exist in Zimbabwe now.’

Review of literature on gendered migration shows that migrants retain their cultural and religious practises in ways that are stricter than what is practised in their countries of origin, as a way of connecting with ‘home’ and reinforcing their cultural identities (see Arthur, 2010; Boccagni, 2017; Ralph and Staeheli, 2011). However, ideas about home are also dependant on prior experiences and social relationships, as exemplified by Rufaro who was harassed and tortured. I further asked her how she felt after her return to Zimbabwe and not being welcome:

‘I just kept thinking, I really don’t have a home, I probably have a new kind of identity because I didn’t belong in England. I don’t belong here (Zimbabwe), so who am I? Where do I belong?’

In contrast to Mai Bhachi and Mai Kwashi’s yearning for ‘home’, Rufaro’s experiences in Zimbabwe challenged her sense of identity, home and belonging. The treatment she received upon return to Zimbabwe contrasts with Mai Kwashi and Mai Bhachi’s notions of home, expressed in ideas about rebuilding and hope. These differences capture the nuances of transnational belonging and notions of ‘home’. Sigona et al. (2015) argue that transnational migrants reconfigure their home in myriad ways and state policies play an important role in facilitating the creation of ‘home’ for migrants, whose old ‘homes’ have been contested. I suggest that Rufaro’s perceived sense of loss of home and ‘identity’ were a result of state sanctioned actions that led her to feel dislocated. In this case, her sense of belonging was threatened both in Zimbabwe and Britain. When I asked her about the practices and resources, she has retained from Zimbabwe she notes:

'It's sad with some Zimbabweans who don't behave and have tried to act like they are not [Zimbabwean] because they are ashamed or whatever, the way Zimbabwe is now. I know Zimbabwe is terrible now, but I still think Zimbabwe is (pause).... I still love my country, but I'm scared to go home. I don't know if it makes sense, but (long pause) even though I am scared to go there because of my experiences, I am still loving my country and then from last year, I was thinking, I miss my mom, I have got sisters, and a brother. But when I think about going home somehow, my heart just stops. I get scared! Don't get me wrong, I love my country. I'm here, I am Zimbabwean, but I'm caught in a tight spot, I (long pause) I don't know.'

Rufaro's narration is situated in a specific social and political context in Zimbabwe, and anti-immigrant rhetoric and hostile environment with arbitrary immigration policies in Britain.

Her sense of belonging and notions of home are complex and entangled with her loyalty, identity as a Zimbabwean and her family connections.

In sum, in this section I demonstrated how anti-immigrant policies, racism, and discrimination contributes to the participants' feelings of (un)belonging and a yearning to return 'home' to an idealised or romanticised Zimbabwe. However, I have shown that notions of 'home' and belonging are defined in myriad ways. For some participants, home was associated with hope and rebuilding. Rufaro's account shows how ideas about home, belonging and identity are interwoven and can be contested, because of prior experiences.

6.2. 'Westernisation' and the cultural impact of the diasporic space

There was a recognition of the social and cultural changes and their impact on their cultural identities among the participants. Nevertheless, the women's responses to these changes differed significantly. Additional to the experiences of the immigration process, ascribed racialised identities also significantly impact the participants' sense of belonging. In this section I explore how the women's cultural beliefs and values that have shaped their

cultural identities are challenged. The discussion in DAR captures these challenges: Dorothy is firm in her views and captures these changes by sharing her thoughts:

‘I think who we are has changed (sic). Although we may consider ourselves to be Zimbabweans, Zimbabwean women in the diaspora no longer function or think like the women back home in any way whatsoever.’

In this extract, when Dorothy expresses how Zimbabwean women in the diaspora no longer think and function like women in Zimbabwe. I propose that the change is a cultural shift in thinking and behaviour, regarding gendered cultural expectations. Smith (2008) argues that cultural hybridised identities are a result of the meetings of different cultures, where new forms and cultural practices emerge. Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2007) argues that Zimbabwean cultural identities are a result of the interaction of their colonial past, imperialism, culture, and other global forces. Departing from these argument, I suggest that the women’s hybridised identities are continually being reconstructed within the contested spaces, where different cultures meet. Dorothy recognises that identity is not fixed, when she notes how Zimbabwean women diaspora have changed

I suggest that the cultural changes that Dorothy alludes to relates to dominant narratives of the typical African woman and real Zimbabwean woman that have shaped their cultural identities. Dorothy’s comparison with women in Zimbabwe is an attempt to demonstrate how much the women in Britain have changed and the influences of context and the processes within these spaces that define their identities. I also suggest that the change is an indication of how culture is not fixed and bounded. Instead, culture evolves and is transformed through contact with others, which serves to challenge dominant practices and established power hierachies. (see Werbner et al. 2015). The impact of cultural

differences on the women is also shared by Gogo Nyari, who previously shared her feelings of unbelonging, whether one had a British passport or not, she then adds:

‘The culture in this country is different, and Zimbabweans are now acting differently, even married women...you can’t tell the difference between the way married women dress and single women dress.’

Embedded within Gogo Nyari’s excerpt are gendered cultural beliefs on respectability and unrespectability of women and the dichotomy between Westernisation and traditional values. Gogo Nyari’s quote indicates that her feelings of (un)belonging and alienation are also a result of cultural differences that she feels have corrupted the women, specifically married women. Bakare-Yusuf (2008: 9) employs Merleau-Ponty’s phenomenology of embodiment to argue that ‘embodied agents are always grounded in their lived experience, precisely because they ‘inhabit’ their body in specific ways: inscribed and circumscribed, social and self-generated’. For African women, their bodies have always been inscribed by both cultural practices and colonialism, which saw their bodies as oversexualised and in need of taming (Oyewumi, 1997; 2004; Tamale, 2006). It is thought-provoking that Gogo Nyari particularly focuses on married women and their embodiment and I argue that Gogo Nyari’s specific focus on married women demonstrates how they are viewed as carriers of culture and respectability in the diaspora, even when this might be oppressive for them.

Perceptions of the diaspora were also differentiated across age. For participants under the age of 35 years, the diaspora symbolised freedom and an awakening to new possibilities, and a redefining of cultural identities. Alternatively, the older women subscribed to the gendered cultural norms and their importance to women’s relationships and lives. The idea of self-expression and freedom was a recurrent theme amongst the

participants who felt restricted and oppressed by their cultures in Zimbabwe. Vee, a participant from DAR group, responded to Dorothy's views on the Zimbabwean women diaspora's changes in thinking and behaviour by disagreeing and speaking about how she had not changed. Instead, the diasporic space had given her a platform to express that which already existed within her. She boldly adds:

'I do not believe being in the diaspora has changed me, it's just given me a place to live where I won't be ostracized or discriminated against for my views and thoughts. They are women, who will say, I have a mermaid spirit (laughs) because I absolutely do not believe in the necessity of having a man or husband'.

In the previous chapter, I illustrated how punishment was used to reinforce conformity to gendered cultural expectations. By disagreeing with Gamuchirai on how the women have changed, Vee's extract shows how the diasporic space provides some women with a space to express divergent views which may not align with their cultural gendered expectations without fear of reprisals. Vee expresses her views on marriage, despite negative responses she might receive from the group. She refers to other Zimbabwean women thinking that she has a mermaid spirit because she does not believe in the need for a man and rejects these spiritual beliefs that other women may use to explain her behaviour. Religion and spirituality are central to African identities and sense of being in the world (Adogame and Spickard, 2010; Mbiti, 1991). However, the subject of a 'mermaid spirit' is a new phenomenon in Zimbabwe, borrowed from West African Pentecostal churches both in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ghana and other parts of East and West African countries (Rey, 2013). Such religious beliefs exercise control over women and reinforce gendered roles within families. I will further discuss religious spaces and constructions of gender and gender relations in chapter seven. Gamuchirai is another young participant, who concurred with Vee and adds:

‘Personally, I think the diaspora has made people do what they feel they want to do without the fear of being judged. It doesn't necessarily change a person per se. But you act out your beliefs freely.’

Gamuchirai and Vee view England as a place where they have agency and can redefine themselves. They realise that they have other identities apart from the ascribed, gendered, cultural identity that was encapsulated in the “African woman” or the “real Zimbabwean woman” narrative. However, the women also recognise the backlash they may experience for expressing themselves. Similar findings were found by Batisai (2016) in her research comparing gender, sexual rights, and the freedom to express them among Zimbabwean women diaspora in South Africa and the UK. She found that participants whose sexual practises and beliefs were illegal in Zimbabwe and contrary to gendered cultural expectations viewed the diaspora as a space for sexual independence and freedom without judgement. For some participants, the cultural change in the diaspora was expressed in terms of blindness and gaining eyesight, Chikindo, a young mother notes:

‘Zimbabwean women in the diaspora have had their eyes opened, that your happiness matters too, and they are not willing to conform to the ‘real Zimbabwean woman’ ('mukadzi chaiye') chant’.

Her use of ‘having their eyes opened’ as a metaphor for women’s experiences in the diaspora assumes a sense of blindness before they settled in the diaspora. I suggest that within their social, cultural spaces, they were exposed to specific culturally defined gender scripts that have formed their identities and social location. These scripts are argued by (Mahalingham, 2006) to inscribe idealised cultural identities, which constrict women’s lives and imply that the women should achieve these ideals. I suggest that in the diaspora, the women realise that they do not have to conform to these ideals, instead, they can reconstruct their cultural identities and redefine their gendered relations. Preem agrees with Chikindo and adds:

‘Now when a woman moves abroad, you get to experience a different life. You have more freedom, dressing, the way you talk, or anything because in diaspora women are considered equal to men’.

I argue that exposure to other gender narratives and egalitarianism challenges the women’s gendered cultural scripts, opening possibilities for redefinitions of identity and belongings. Building on his argument on cultural hybridity in a globalised world, Bhabha (1994; 2015) suggests that cultural hybridity empowers individuals to achieve agency and authority over their lives rather than a fulfilment of an authentic identity. In this study, the women felt pressured to fulfil cultural expectations of being good mothers and wives. I also suggest that though participants like Chikindo and Vee felt that they can express themselves in specific ways, their bodies as migrant women are still inscribed and ascribed immigration and racialised labels that exercise control over their lives. Chikindo further explains this blindness, by adding that:

‘You start to realise that our culture is oppressive to women only. My time in England opened my eyes, so much..... To me, culture is a way to oppress women because if you look at it its always about what women should do, how they should dress, how they should talk.....But you realise when you move to the diaspora that's when you are empowered, and then you hear women saying, the women in the diaspora have lost their identity.’

As I stated in chapter three, gender conceptualisation in African contexts is intertwined with culture, colonial and religious history (Oyewumi, 1997, 2005). The United Nations report on gender equality in Zimbabwe found that though gender equality and women’s empowerment is part of the Zimbabwe’s (2013) Constitutional amendments, black Zimbabwean women are continuing to experience inequality due to harmful cultural and religious practises, within private and public spaces. For the women, the UK provides them with a space to have agency over their own bodies, socially position themselves equal to men and not conform to gendered cultural expectations. Owomoyela (2002) notes that before colonialism, men and women in Zimbabwe Shona society had well-defined roles and

obligations. These roles meant that both men and women had power over their domains and were equally important. However, the influences of colonial legacy, African independent churches on socio-cultural practises have redefined women's roles and their social positionings in private and public spaces. These practises and processes privilege men and create social hierarchies and inequalities (Oyewumi, 2011); a reason the participants might feel oppressed and controlled by their cultures. It is important to note that the reconceptualisation of identity and belonging is a process full of tensions and conflicts, as individuals balance their integration into society, and their right to preserve their cultural norms and practises (Anthias, 2016). The challenge of balancing integration and preservation of one's cultural values and beliefs is seen as the main area of contention for women in the Zimbabwean diaspora. Grace notes these challenges by adding:

‘Yes, I think Zimbos [Zimbabweans,] we are so adaptable, we thrive so much in foreign countries, but we do lose a sense of who we are. It's a catch 22, we can fit everywhere, but we are always overcompensating. Nigerians, bring their food and speak their Language, and we do the western thing.’

Grace makes a comparison between Nigerian and Zimbabwean diasporas by noting how Nigerians maintain their cultures through eating their food and speaking their languages. In contrast to Grace's extract on Zimbabwean diaspora assimilation, the findings in this study show that food and language were central to the participants' maintenance of their cultural identities and connection with Zimbabwe. Furthermore, the participants employed their African values and cultural beliefs to separate themselves from the wider society, specifically, perceived British influences on the family. I will discuss food and language in Chapter Nine as part of the socio-cultural resources that participants employ to maintain their cultural identities and connections with Zimbabwe. I suggest that like, some participants' generalisations and homogenising of all Zimbabweans, Grace is also

generalising certain behaviours to all Nigerians in the diaspora. I also propose that the ability of women in Zimbabwean diaspora to adapt to British culture is, in some respects, a result of the British colonial legacy of Eurocentric education and the uptake of English as a national language in Zimbabwe, which enabled the women to settle and work in Britain.

Earlier research on migration argued that migrants assimilated into the communities of the country of settlement and lost their identities. However, contemporary research has shown that migrants have multiple identities and multiple senses of belonging, which are not lost, but instead they are redefined through the creation of new identifications and belongings (Bhabha 2004; Hall, Battanni, and Neitz 2003; Hall and Du Gay 1996). Dorothy further adds how Zimbabwean women diaspora could no longer claim belonging to Zimbabwe anymore:

‘Once having bitten from the forbidden fruit of westernisation, it is hard for most in the diaspora to comprehend that they can never be true Zimbabweans anymore. Although they may have immense love and patriotism for Zimbabwe. Foreign culture will always fill their minds and how they think, (some agree) including how they manipulate or address people, (laughs) the people who notice the differences are the Zimbabwean women back home, and they don’t like it.’

In the previous section, I discussed Rufaro’s disappointment with Zimbabweans who denied their Zimbabweanness; in contrast to Rufaro’s views, Dorothy claims that Zimbabwean women diaspora can no longer claim belonging and affiliation with women in Zimbabwe.

Both Rufaro and Dorothy’s views of Zimbabweanness are based on a bounded and homogenous Zimbabwean culture and identity. In Chapter Five, I argued that there is no unified or homogenised Zimbabwean identity, instead, the women have multiple identities that are mediated by class, socio-economic factors, geographical location (rural and urban areas), religious beliefs and ethnicity. The notion of creating essentialist identities is also exemplified by Mano and Willems’ s (2010) study. Mano and Willems (2010) conducted

research on the use of social media platform, *NewZimbabwe* to explore, issues of identity, and Zimbabweanness. They used the case study of Makosi, a Zimbabwean woman who appeared on *Big Brother 4*, in 2005. Similar to the findings in this study, Mano and Willems (2010) found that Makosi's participation challenged the notions of Zimbabweanness and the boundaries of that identity. Participants on the forum- *NewZimbabwe*, in their study highlighted various factors that they felt contributed to notions of a Zimbabwean identity, for example, language, class, education, accent. Mano and Willems argue how the participants attempted to define Zimbabweanness, by invoking essentialist terms and boundaries. I also note that in the study Mano and Willems (2010) define Zimbabweanness, as a national identity, tied to ideas of nationalism and patriotism.

Dorothy employs the biblical story which is based on Adam and Eve's disobedience and having their eyes opened to good and evil, resulting in punishment. Her use of the metaphor of the forbidden fruit to explain how the women's identities have changed shows the negative perception she has of the diaspora. The diaspora is 'the forbidden fruit of Westernisation' that has tainted the women's lives, such that they can no longer claim belonging to the Zimbabwe collective. From this extract, I propose that Dorothy's use of the story is reflective of the culture and religious influences within which she is embedded and employs available socio-cultural scripts to construct narrations of belonging and identity. I also suggest that the women's views of their cultures and the diaspora are reflective of the socio-political narratives that locate African values against the perceived negative influences of Westernisation. African feminism was developed out of the critique of western feminist Eurocentric hegemonic forces, which created a dichotomy between tradition (African) and Western (modern) (Narayan, 1997; Norwood, 2013). Furthermore, Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2007;

2014) argues that these dichotomies persist today due to the coloniality of power that persistently positions Africans as passive and in need of saving by the West. Political discourses that have reinforced these dichotomies are also demonstrated in the negative political narratives about Britain, promoted by the former president of Zimbabwe, the late Robert Mugabe. Although Dorothy suggests that Zimbabwean women in the diaspora have changed as a result of 'eating of the forbidden fruit', she is not aware of the impact of the colonial legacy, African religious beliefs and nationalist discourses on Zimbabweans' cultural identities. Furthermore, globalisation and technological advancement have resulted in the exposure of Zimbabweans to other cultures and ideas even in their own country, therefore, influences from outside forces are not a new phenomenon.

In summary, the findings show that exposure to other cultural and social scripts on gender and identity challenged the participants' gendered, ascribed cultural identities that prioritised gendered relations, motherhood, and the family. The participants responded to these cultural challenges in different ways. For some participants, the diaspora opened new possibilities and socio-cultural scripts to reconceptualise their cultural identities in ways that aligned with their beliefs about themselves. For others, the perceived western beliefs and values were a threat to their cultural identities and systems of beliefs and values. These perceptions of the diaspora were underpinned by a dichotomous view of their cultures in Zimbabwe and the Western, modern life of the diaspora. In the following section, I will explore how the women used their bodies as a space to redefine their cultural identities within social and religious spaces.

6.2.1. 'Where is the woman': Gender and embodiment

In this section, I shall examine how the participants use their bodies to negotiate the entanglements of gender, culture, and marital status in contested social and religious spaces. I particularly draw from Vee's quote, 'where is the woman? Some women don't know who they are apart from their roles, wife, daughter in law, mother (sic).' when she shared the different roles that Zimbabwean women have and the cultural ascriptions that have shaped their lives. My argument is that in this quote, Vee brings to the fore the tensions between the individual and their right to redefine their identities and belongings and cultural beliefs that defined their identities. There is extensive research on African women's bodies, culture, and embodiment (see Dustin, 2010; Killian, 2006; Whitehorn, Ayonrinde and Maingay, 2002). I draw on African and black feminist arguments on the black body as a space for cultural, social and political inscription by the other to demonstrate how the women use their bodies to redefine themselves and their identities (Collins, 1990; Oyewumi, 1995). Tinotenda shared her views on changing gender roles due to women's success, and noted that these changes also included their appearance:

'You think that you have never worn trousers in your life and your partner doesn't like it and You are suggestive and it is too much you know; a woman leaves the house and didn't ask themselves: should I be wearing this? you know. You see a Zimba [Zimbabwean woman] wearing shorts that are so short, typical you know, and you think she actually left home wearing that?'

African women's bodies are argued to be defined and imbued with cultural meanings and beliefs that are embedded within patriarchy. These meanings and cultural beliefs work to control women and render their bodies spaces for tensions and moral struggles (Amadiume, 1997; Dosekun, 2016; Mama, 1995; Tamale, 2011). Tinotenda's account reveals how women's bodies are entangled with culture and personification. Similar findings were found by Tinarwo and Pasura's (2014) multi-sited ethnographic study, conducted at Zimbabwean

diaspora social gatherings and events in Britain. Although they conducted an ethnography at different settings, they note that Zimbabwean women at the events wore “skimpy clothing”, had tattoos, nose rings and other body modifications, which they argue were contrary to traditional modes of respectability. Tinotenda’s extract and Tinarwo and Pasura’s (2014) findings illustrate how women’s bodies are a space for moral preservation, in this case, by not wearing clothes that are ‘revealing’ or considered unacceptable. Furthermore, cultural expectations that govern relationships and power hierarchies between men and women also include the presentation of women’s bodies within these relationships. Tinotenda goes further to share a situation between her husband and sister in law⁷:

‘I have seen even, I have an aunt who is a size 28, I think, and some things she wears, you think what is she thinking? Not leggings? She says in Zimbabwe I was oppressed by babamunini wako, [your uncle] and now I am my own person. My husband goes, ah, mumba muya amugarike because, what ambuya zvavakapfeka izvi, and he leaves [I can’t stay in the home because of what mother in law is wearing [making him uncomfortable]].’

There are various themes that are pertinent in Tinotenda’s extract. The first theme is related to how power hierarchies are determined by kinship relationships and not necessarily gender in the Shona custom (Jaji, 2016; Oyewumi, 1997). In her seminal work on gender conceptualisation, Oyewumi (1997) utilises Yoruba culture in Nigeria to argue against western feminist emphasis on gender as an organising category for social relationships and power hierarchies. Instead, she argued that social hierarchy was determined by family affiliations and seniority within specific relationships. Tinotenda’s extract demonstrates these hierarchies and how interaction between sister in law and brother in law is governed by their social location and kinship relationship within the family. However, the same

⁷ In the Shona custom, there are various terms used to define relationships, which may be difficult to define in English. In this case, Tinotenda’s sister in law (her father’s brother’s wife) is mother in law to her husband and their relationships is governed by certain cultural rules and expectations.

relationships that infer power to the women, also limit their self-expression and embodiment, as Tinotenda's husband complained about how the sister in law was dressed. In resistance to these cultural expectations, the sister in law dressed in ways, she knew were deemed unacceptable. It is interesting to note that her clothes became an expression of identity in the diaspora.

Another participant, Eli, refutes the idea of loss of 'respectability' and identity in the diaspora, based on women's adornment of their bodies. Eli remarks how women dressed in similar ways in Zimbabwe and gives an example of her mother, who wore trousers and her father did not object:

'My mom used to wear Jeans. She used to wear anything. My mom, her hair doesn't grow, so she has white hair, from a young age even my hair is grey at home, she looks good for her age and my dad was happy with that. So, in this country, some other person wants to say, you can't do this and the other, you can't. She has always been like that, so, it's not very much Zimbabwean, she is not doing anything wrong. She still the same person she was when she was in Zim.'

Eli's account shows how women's choices to dress in specific ways, deemed unrespectable, was not a result of being in the diaspora, but that such practises are also found in Zimbabwe. Earlier in Chapter Five, I discussed Zanele who moved from a middle-class area to a low-density area, where local people admonished her for wearing a short sports skirt. Her account of her experiences was based on class differences and perceptions of women's appearance in public. Entwistle (2015) notes that when individuals flout conventions and not conform to cultural expectations and do not wear what is perceived as appropriate clothes, they risk exclusion and alienation. Similarly, Eli expresses how other people try to control her appearance by invoking Zimbabwean cultural expectations and condemning women who might dress in ways that are contrary to what is culturally acceptable for a

married woman. I suggest that the account of Eli's mother also demonstrates how individual experiences cannot be extended to all Zimbabwean women in the diaspora. Not only are the women's bodies inscribed by culture and racialised by others, some participants felt conflicted, being pulled between resisting certain cultural expectations while at the same time reinforcing their 'Africanness' in the diaspora. Grace articulates the tensions and struggles:

'I think, in my 20s where it was about finding myself, defining myself, now I'm so comfortable in my own skin. I will wear my hair natural, I never used to, OMG! I would never be seen with natural hair, I was about the weaves, it was about what's in and stuff, as expected for me, not knowing my own identity.'

She goes further to share how she sees herself now:

'So, I'm happy with my skin colour, for starters. I tell people, no trust, I will never bleach, I will never try to be anything else, I'm happy to be black. I'm so in my element. I love my body! I love my curves! You know, how some people be like, they want to be a size zero! Hell No! I don't want to be size zero. I'm happy with my body, I feel sexy! I don't look at models and think that I want to be like that.'

Global influences on fashion and beauty can be seen in how Grace's extracts include issues of race, body image and weight. The excerpt also demonstrates the tension between the universalism of Eurocentric accounts of beauty with the acknowledgement of diverse ethnicities and cultural differences in perceptions of beauty. Dosekun (2016) argues that African women have complex relationships to fashion and beauty that is mediated by the colonial past and the materiality of globalisation. Grace's struggle was between defining beauty based on her own standard and the social pressure to conform to Eurocentric societal standards of beauty that contrast with her natural appearance. Not only do women have to fit the cultural respectable woman ideal, they are also under pressure to fit current Eurocentric modes of beauty. Mai Chiworo, RRM group, a woman in her forties shared her views on what it meant for her to be a Zimbabwean woman and the pressure to conform to Eurocentric standards of beauty:

‘I would define a Zimbabwean woman, as being big, curvy, like me (laughter and agreement from the other women). A woman who has curves who is proud of her body and does not compare herself with women in this country, who are skinny, and doesn’t start imitating English culture.’

Mai Mukono, interjects and adds:

‘Dietingas Zimbabwean women, we never knew about being skinny and dieting until we came here, so that is my definition of a Zimbabwean woman.’

Further to beauty and embodiment, Mai Chiworo and Mai Mukono equate their body images with their identities as Zimbabwean women and in duality to Eurocentric body images and identities. They are older women who are proud to be curvy, a contrast to what they see as the skinny, British mode of beauty. Additional to comparisons with European modes of beauty, Tinotenda shared her experiences with a male co-worker who complimented Zimbabwean women on their natural beauty compared to other African women:

‘When I first worked at St Georges, on a night shift, and I was working with other black moms, from Ghana. Then the man just came up, one of the man just came up and said, you are definitely from Zim and I said, how do you know? For all you know I could be Jamaican, and he said, no, you are from Zimbabwe, because Zimbabwe women don't wear make- up. They just love themselves the way they are. You never see Zimbabwean women, wearing makeup that is extreme. He said, no! You don't see a Zimbabwean woman with red out there, lipstick.... now I am seeing it! Like iye muroora wangu, [sister in law] the sister who left me, I’ve seen the bleaching, and it looks awful, because it’s terrible.’

Tinotenda’s conversation on fashion and beauty was framed within an oppositional ‘African/Western’ binary, between the use of beauty products and the natural look. The man was praising Tinotenda for not wearing makeup and associated it with being prouder of her looks than those who wear makeup. It is important to note that the colleague’s observations and compliments may have been based on personal choice. There is an implication that generally, Zimbabwean women were proud of their looks and did not need to conform to western standards of beauty, so the women that were bleaching and wearing

heavy makeup are influenced by western society and departed from their Zimbabwean pride.

Dosekun (2016) strongly argues against the constant contrasting of African women's bodies and appearance to whiteness and Eurocentric notions of beauty. In her research with young Nigerian women who wore wigs and weaves, she argues that the vilifying of African women who wear makeup, wear wigs or weaves as evidence of self-hatred and inferiority complex in academic literature was too simplistic and reduced African women's complex lives and relationships to their bodies. She further adds that such generalisations presume that the women are 'racially damaged and presumes gross delimitations of our capacity for self-reflexivity and agentic self-stylisation' (Dosekun, 2016: 64). Although, I concur with Dosekun's (2016) arguments, based on Tinotenda's extract, I suggest that the participants also need to take responsibility for how they also contribute to the reinforcing and reproduction of the Eurocentric standards.

On reflection, I recognise how my own beliefs and values regarding appearance influenced the interview process. The same cultural values and norms that have shaped the women's lives, also shaped my life. The notion of the 'African look' or 'ethnic look' is one I know too well, as someone who has had dreadlocks. My choice of hairstyle was a deliberate action of non-conformity and (un)belonging to social beliefs I felt were in place to constrain and control me. However, there are beliefs with some people that dreadlocks are unbecoming of a respectable woman (Mutukwa, 2016), hence, my appearance may have had an impact on what the women felt they could share, or criticise, when it came to fashion, wigs or weaves.

In summary, the findings show the tensions between cultural expectations and the women's right to wear and present their bodies as they wish. Other ways through which issues of women's bodies were debated and contested was through narrations of how some women had changed and were no longer conforming to the culturally respectable forms of appearance. The findings also show how women's bodies and embodiment are also linked to familial relationships that govern their social interaction and, some participants were using the diasporic space to redefine these relationships. I argue that although some of the participants use their agency to resist or conform to cultural expectations, there were also women who were quite happy with their looks and bodies. I suggest that the women use their bodies to resist certain cultural practices and expectations, simultaneously, using their bodies to reinforce their naturalness seen as 'Africanness' in the diaspora. In the next section, I will explore gender and embodiment within religious spaces. I focus on religious spaces because, apart from the family institution, religious places are spaces where gender and embodiment are contested and redefined.

6.3. Religious spaces: gendered identities and control of women's bodies

In this section, I will examine how the women's bodies are reconceptualised within religious spaces and answering the question on how cultural identities are reconstructed within contested spaces. Tied to the influences of cultural beliefs and values on women's bodies are the impact of religion on gender and women's embodiment (Castelli, 2001; Moyo, 2004; Tamale, 2014). In Zimbabwe, historian scholars: Barnes (1992); Mlambo (2014); Raftopoulos and Mlambo (2009); Ndlovu-Gatsheni, (2007); and West (2002) have chronicled the

intertwining of religion, spirituality and Zimbabwean history. In this study, I argue that religious spaces have contributed and continue to contribute to women's control of their bodies and embodiment in the diaspora. The participants were active in maintaining a sense of community and belonging with other women in the diaspora through their local women's Christian and online groups. I will discuss online groups and social networks in the following chapter.

Some of the participants were part of Zimbabwean diaspora churches that met regularly for fellowship. The findings show that like other cultural practises that are transposed to the diaspora, migrants' religious beliefs and practises are also transposed to the diaspora in the same way. The influences of the religious beliefs are noted by Eli who shares her experiences of the United Methodist church. I use her extract to deconstruct the relationship between the colonial past and the continued reproduction of religious practises within transnational spaces. Her narration was within the confines of discussing women's bodies and control over their appearance:

'You like, for example the Methodist church, no, actually, it was not an English Methodist church, it was a Zimbabwean church because I went there for a long time. I was introduced and I went, and I loved it and I felt loved there, but then you know vana mai veruwadzano (Christian women's groups) they wear that horrible blue dress with the red, color or..... there are two of them, the ones vemabhachi matsvuku [red jackets] and United Methodist, they wear the horrible blue dress, red tunic with a black skirt. I think that it's so primitive and you go on the tube wearing that in London?!?! Honestly?!?! [That] uniform was introduced by Mai (pauses to remember name) ...in 1964 in Mutare, Hurdzel that was the time. So, if you think you can judge my clothes, and you dress like that here in England in November?!? you know. You need to put some trousers and a jumper, you what I mean? To me that is Zimbabwean attitude. If you want to wear your church uniforms in this country, change and do that which is appropriate. That's just look so horrible and so inappropriate for the weather, and it's so outdated. Ruwadzano, they still wear the same uniforms worn by people in Zim from a very long time ago.'

There are a few concerns regarding colonialism, religion, belonging and transnationality which Eli raises, and I will discuss them in turn. Firstly, Eli's excerpt reveals the effects of

traditional Christian beliefs that were introduced to black Zimbabweans during the colonial era. Part of the Christian practises that were introduced to the people was the wearing of church uniforms.⁸ The history and reasons for wearing church uniforms is a contested area, with various arguments provided. Specific to the United Methodist church in Africa, Moss (1991) suggests that the black, red and white colours were an attempt to bridge the gap between Christian symbolism and African people's traditional colours of the spirit mediums, to help legitimatise the Christians within the communities.

Mukonyora (2006) argues that these religious practises and specific code of dress work to create an interdependent relationship between culture and religion.

Secondly, Eli notes how these Christian practises of wearing uniforms was transposed to Britain. Adogame and Spickard (2010) note the gap in literature on sub-Saharan African religious transnationalism in comparison to other migrants in other parts of the world. However, the feminisation of the new African diaspora has opened opportunities to explore issues of gender, religion and identity for the African women diaspora (Parsitau and Mwaura, 2010). Specific to Zimbabwe, the emerging scholarship has found an increase in transportation of both traditional missionary churches and African Pentecostal churches

⁸ *There are various accounts of how the United Methodist Episcopal Church (UMC) for Africans in Zimbabwe started, Ranger (1984) notes that The American Methodists established themselves in Mutare and Makoni districts and did not have any other missionary bases in the country. The World Methodist Council website notes that the united Methodist Church was started in Mutare, Zimbabwe by Bishop Joseph Crane Hartzell in 1897. The church's first mission station was donated by Cecil Rhodes, who was an administrator of the British Colony of Rhodesia, who owned the property.*

to Britain (Biri, 2015; Bloch, 2009; Chinouya, 2007; Pasura, 2014). Aspinall and Chinouya (2016) add that part of this transportation of the Christian practises is the religious practise of wearing uniforms in Anglican, Methodist and Catholic churches in Britain. Pasura's (2008; 2014) research with Zimbabwean Catholic congregations across the country found that the wearing of church uniforms (guilds in Catholicism) on the streets serve to give individuals a distinct identity of which they are proud. Identification with these religious and social groups provide spaces where individuals can reminisce about their shared memories of Zimbabwe, thereby reinforcing their cultural identities. Reinforcement of cultural identity is also noted on the UK Methodist Church Zimbabwean Fellowship (MCZF) website which states that the fellowship was started by a group of Zimbabwean diaspora women who were keen to share the gospel and 'create and maintain cultural awareness of traditional Zimbabwean Methodist church styles of worship, music, and participate in group activities'. The Fellowship's website explains that the church seeks to practice traditional Zimbabwean styles of worship and religious practice as a way of maintaining their cultural identities. It is interesting to note how the women's uniforms serve to reinforce their cultural identities and religious practices in Zimbabwe, yet they also represent the contestation between their colonial past and transnationality.

Lastly, Eli acknowledges how she benefited from being part of the Methodist church, felt loved and had a sense of belonging. However, she further expresses the need for the religious practices to be discarded, as they did not conform to places and spaces within which the women inhabit in the diaspora. I argue that by creating these religious spaces, the women are creating Zimbabwean imagined communities, where they find spiritual sustenance and fellowship in a country where they feel they do not belong. These findings

are similar to other research on the Zimbabwean diaspora that found that membership and participation in religious groups improved migrants' sense of belonging, serve their emotional and spiritual needs and connect with other migrants from their country of origin (Biri, 2015; Machoko, 2013; Maxwell, 2006; Pasura, 2014). Though, wearing uniforms is considered by some religious groups as an identity marker that differentiates them from settled communities and serves to celebrate their cultural identities (Hinfelaar, 2003; Pasura, 2014). I suggest, however, that the uniforms are also part of the moral and cultural inscriptions and ascriptions on women's bodies, based on the notions of respectability and (un)respectability.

Pasura (2008) notes that church uniforms that Christian migrant women wear differ based on the women's marital status and age. I argue that the wearing of uniforms to differentiate the women's marital status also contributes to the exclusion and stigmatising of unmarried and divorced women, as I discuss later in the chapter. Chipso shares her experiences as a divorced woman in church:

'Oh, yeah, there is still pressure, that you should be married, you go to places, you go to churches, especially Zim churches, yes, when you get there, they are like; what is your married name? I am like seriously? (laughs) and you say, mai Tee, and then they are like; no, we mean your husband's name and you say; there is no husband. Then you must be explaining yourself, and make you feel like, you have committed a crime or something, you divorced your husband and they say something about you, you know! You feel this pressure, that you are single, not just single, but a single mother, worse, single is fine, but single mother is worse. I have to justify why I am a single mother and you have to justify yourself and I found that women are the ones, who put you under that pressure? it's the women that ask you; what is your husband's name?.. then you have those that tell you, God hates divorce, and quote verses to you Malachi 4, or is it 3? (laughs)'.

Chipso's narration is an example of how women might feel excluded and alienated, based on their marital status and how belonging is constantly negotiated, as women's lives change.

Chipso's divorce shifted her social positioning within the religious groups, which impacted her sense of belonging. Mukonyora (2006) argues that religious practises and belongings are

marked by contradictions and conflicts. Eli also gives an example of how married women in church treated her as a divorced woman:

‘They will never support you in anything. you are on your own, you and your child are on your own., this is other Zimbo’s. They are the worst people for single parents. They don’t like you. Already, their husbands are cheating with other people and they take it out on you. So, one woman kissed her husband in front of me, because, he had come to speak to me. So, I backed off from those areas. so, I just live my life the way I want to live it and protect myself. And you know, guard my heart from becoming bitter, or coming across as being bitter, you know, really just fighting for yourself and your child and for your place in society. You think you are married today; you could be divorced tomorrow... I’ve accepted that and now I won’t go places, unless I have to. I’ve completely, backed off, from social settings like churches. I’ve stopped going, I used to go to Methodist, and ZAOGA, a very Zimbabwean church. You become an enemy of all the married women in the church. When you go, their husbands, are like sister Eli, sister Eli, and their wives don’t like that, and they see you like you are threat!’

I argue that these spaces construct gender in specific ways that constrain all women’s participation and leads to feelings of unbelonging. For divorced participants like Eli and Chipso, they deal with the feelings of unbelonging by disengaging from the groups and creating new social connections. In his work on gender, religion, and culture in Africa, Rwafa (2016) argues that in African religious groups, women are suppressed and what differs is the degree to which women are oppressed based on the church’s doctrine. The findings in this study concur with Rwafa’s (2016) assertions and further demonstrate how research should not only focus on patriarchal oppression within religious spaces, but also how gender intersects with marital status and, I suggest, socioeconomic factors in creating power hierarchies between women. The control of women’s bodies is also strengthened through transnational links that enable pastors in Zimbabwe to visit churches in Britain, Eli further explains:

‘My personal experience of that was when I belonged to Zimbabwean churches, people still made that judgement that at home we do it this way! But actually, at home, we never did that! So, stop there! Because, people expect that the way they did things, just because we all came from Zim. It was a lot of that in Zimbabwean churches and more and more, I found that if there is a speaker from home, fresh from home, they would come and tell you off about the way you are dressing, the way you are.Like wait a minute, I still dress, like this in Zimbabwe and my father

was happy with it! They say *kubatira chirungu pamusoro* (following English cultural beliefs you don't know about). I dress like this at home. So, it is not my first-time wearing jeans in this country. For some people, wearing Jeans, wearing leggings, so for me, as an intelligent girl, then I won't turn up to a church from Zimbabwe wearing jeans, because I wouldn't do that at home either. I would wear them at home, but dress appropriately for the occasion, but I think there's a lot of judgmental people out there.'

Eli's excerpt illustrates that additional to the transportation of Christian beliefs to the diaspora, pastors who visit from Zimbabwe tend to be critical of women's appearance and reinforce ideas around women's embodiment. Research literature shows that improved telecommunications and travel mean that the churches in the diaspora engage with other churches and offices across national borders (Asamoah-Gyadu, 2013; Maxwell, 2006; Pasura, 2012). The impact of Christianity on women's sexuality and embodiment is also found in Martin-Shaw's (2015) research on women in Zimbabwe. She notes that the women in the study were conflicted over a desire for gender equality and limitations of their Christian faith, which dictated how they dressed and presented themselves in public. Transnational connections result in the transportation of these religious standards and their reinforcement in the diaspora. Biri's (2015) findings from research on Zimbabwe Assemblies of God Africa (ZAOGA) church in Zimbabwe found that participants tended to frame their identities based on an idealised Zimbabwean homeland and condemned those who deviate from the religious and cultural standards, resulting in essentialising of identities. The condemnation of deviation is framed within phrases like, '*kubatira chirungu pamusoro*', a reference to Zimbabweans who take up foreign cultural practises that they do not know much about. However, within Eli's account there are also tensions, where she criticises the condemnation of women wearing clothes perceived as unbecoming, yet she ensures that she does not wear these clothes when she attends church services.

Regulation of women's bodies within religious spaces was also reflected in my observations and participation in Zimbabwean Apostolic churches in Manchester and Wolverhampton. Masowe Apostolic churches are part of the African Independent Churches (AIC) and they wear white robes with other differentiated markings on them to denote their denominations. Some of their practises include men shaving their heads and women covering their heads (Mukonyora, 2006). When attending both women's groups, I was advised not to wear trousers, dark coloured or tight-fitting clothes as it was against the church rules. While in Zimbabwe, some of the churches conduct their services in the open, in Britain they conduct their services in buildings, illustrating their adaptability to the context within which they live. These Apostolic sects are known to have incorporated Christianity as introduced by the colonial missionaries with their own African spiritual practices (Adogame and Spickard, 2010; Masondo, 2014; Pasura, 2014). One of the churches, from Zimbabwe, further asked me to have a wrap round my waist and cover my head in order to participate in the services. My experiences demonstrate the transportation of religious practices to the diaspora and the policing and control of women's bodies within Zimbabwean Christian churches. I discussed my positionality and experiences of the research process in Chapter Four.

Another example of how culture and religion intersect in controlling women's embodiment in religious spaces is Tinotenda's narration of her domestic worker, Rosy*. Rosy was an orphan, single mother and homeless at fifteen. She was adopted by a local church and cared for, until she left to work in Britain. Tinotenda narrates how Rosy changed when she lived with her:

‘Because, she was coming from the Message church, you know where women cover up. So, because she came here, and her life was different, she abandoned the religion and their ways. She relaxed her hair, she started to wear short things, she started to wear makeup, and that didn’t go well with some of the people who knew her, and they stopped her from going to church. If you change your ways, they stop you from going to church [she was excommunicated from the church] like, they believe that you must marry within the church, so, if you marry someone from outside, you must go and confess, and then ask for forgiveness and it’s up to the church to forgive her or not. So, she was disowned by her church.’

From Tinotenda’s account, the women in the End Time Message Church in Zimbabwe,⁹ are required to cover their bodies, not wear makeup, or straighten their hair. In Zimbabwe, Rosy adhered to the church expectations, however, when Rosy came to Britain she rejected the teachings of her faith regarding women’s appearance and embodiment. Similar to some of the participants who strongly felt that the diaspora had provided them a space where they could express themselves with no judgment, I suggest that the diaspora provided Rosy with a space where she could redefine herself and disconnect from the control of the church. Yet, non-conformity resulted in her ostracisation from the church. Rosy’s example demonstrates how religion serves as a tool to control women and to punish them when they do not comply, rendering women’s bodies a site for religious and moral struggles (Adogame, Gerloff and Hock, 2008; Perreira and Ibrahim, 2010).

Gender, culture, and religion are also tied to issues of gender relations as colonial continuities of gendered roles continue in the diaspora. These continuities are narrated by Ruvarashe when she shared her experiences of the church women’s groups:

‘ I asked the ladies at church, where they were talking about women, you are always saying that you are too tired [for sex] and it is too much and I said; you know what? some of you are giving advice and yet you had kids in Zim. We have kids here, this thing about putting effort.....and I said, if someone has just given birth! What are you talking about? Your back will be hurting, and they said; it’s too much, [refusing men sex]. The men are complaining, and they will leave you and I said;

⁹ The End time message church in Zimbabwe was founded by William Marrion Branham and established in Zimbabwe in the 1980s. There are many other denominations that have fragmented from the main church across the country.

excuse me, I just want to understand, is that what we are here for? And they said; why you would want to give your man grounds to cheat or leave you? And i was like, these men, do they get similar type of teaching where they are told about how to be good husbands? They said, that's not our concern, they are told where they are.'

One of the main themes emerging from the study is the women's changed social positionings, which challenged cultural gender constructions and gendered relations. In this extract, the women in the church strengthen women's gendered roles by reprimanding them for refusing to adhere to gendered cultural expectations, of being good wives and seeing to the needs of their husbands. The women in the group were encouraging others to not deny their husbands their conjugal rights, even if the women were tired. African feminist Amadiume (1997) argues that sexuality within African cultures, seen through the Christian lens, insist on sex as duty and sex as marital right for the men and focuses on women's responsibility for men's pleasure and not their own (see also Atanga et al, 2013; Atanga and Djmeli, 2011; McFadden, 2005). Ruvarashe further adds that:

'I said, I think, as the pastor's wife, you should know what they [men] are being taught because it's not fair! That's why your doors are open with couples coming to say that they are having problems at home, because people you teach one side. It's the woman who must be ready. Yes! No wonder women are the ones who suffer all the time, the expectation is too much! Then another woman said; pastor said to me i was told by my mom in law, when i was married, She said; now that you have the child don't leave your man to starve if the baby cries, it doesn't matter you have to attend to your man first! Sometimes, I'm like this teaching that you are giving, you are giving teachings that you have discussed with your hubby or what? Is this like a survey that you did, that you can say, generally, 80% of men would prefer this and that, she said, the baby won't die from crying, you have to attend to your hubby because if you only attend to the baby, the marriage will breakdown and i said; then I'm living with an immature young man, if I'm constantly worried that my relationship is going to break up.'

Chipo also voices similar sentiments on prioritising men and their needs:

'Like in the churches, you have communities, Zim churches, you all have children and have issues with child care, and think that if we all have children, can't we have an arrangement, where we can come up with a summer programme for Zimbabweans and help each other out, supporting each other, but it's like, no, the men are complaining that you are not taking care of them. You are working too much. The men need you to take care of them and cook for them.'

These extracts demonstrate the tensions between women maintaining their gendered roles and adjustments to other demands of work and a lack of support in raising children in the diaspora. Ruvarashe and Chipso challenge the religious groups' approaches and advice to women on maintaining their gendered relationships. In Chapter 8, I discuss further the women's struggles with balancing work, family demands and conformity to gendered cultural expectations. Mate's (2002) research also found that a traditional heteronormative conception of marriage was the foundation of the groups' teaching and the women's roles were clearly demarcated as 'helpers' to the men. The women's groups also discussed women enjoying sex, within the confines of marriage with an emphasis on women not denying their husbands sex, because then they would stray (and be justified in doing so). These findings demonstrate the role of religious women's groups in emphasising gendered roles, and control of women's bodies and sexuality.

In summary, the findings show the women used their Christian women's groups to reinforce gendered roles and control of women's bodies and embodiment. The focus on marriage results in single and divorced women being marginalised and stigmatised.

6.4. Social networks: Belonging and redefining relationships

In this section, I focus on social media groups as alternative spaces for redefining identities and relationships. Additionally, I will examine how other social networks, were integral to participants' wellbeing and sense of belonging. Davis, et al. (2018) note that transnational networks and participation in transnational political, economic, and social spaces leads to individuals identifying with multiple, national, or cultural identities and forming attachments

to more than one country (Brah, 1996). I will start by analysing the impact of Facebook and WhatsApp groups on the participants' belongings and identities., followed by an examination of their social networks.

Research on diaspora and use of social media notes the myriad of ways online groups are employed by migrants (Croucher, 2011; Eriksen, 2007; Fortunati, Pertierra and Vincent, 2012, Willems and Mano, 2017 and Wang et al., 2012). Some of the research shows that migrants use these platforms to debate identity and participate in national politics, (re)create communities and share experiences (Mitra 2001; Ogola 2011).

As stated in the Methodology chapter, part of the recruitment process was through Facebook groups. I joined four Facebook groups specific to Zimbabwean women and four of the participants were recruited on these groups. Two of the groups were for women in the UK and the other two were for Zimbabwean women all over the world. To build rapport and some trust with the participants I had to participate in some of the discussions and during the interview process, certain occurrences at the time were part of the discussions. For example, at the time of the interview with Zanele there was a discussion on one of the groups on someone who needed help with their studies:

'Yesterday, there was a post on A1*¹⁰ group where somebody said something about this school post. First, there was someone who posted and said: inbox, and I can help you and somebody else then posted saying: ,the person put the response [from their inbox] on A1* saying; look at the response she gave me, it's not even helpful (laughs). Yes, the person helping thought she was helping and the person who was being helped comes on A1* saying she has not helped at all. This is not help! That's why people don't help, that's one reason, why people don't help.'

¹⁰ There are many Facebook groups, specific to Zimbabwean women diaspora connecting women across the globe. Some of groups are specific to Zimbabwean women in the UK. Some of the participants talked about a specific Zimbabwean women diaspora Facebook group. For purposes of protecting the members of the group and confidentiality, I have renamed the group A1*

Zanele and I are both members of A1* and she shared her experiences of the group, where a member who posted on the group asking for help with her studies. Another member offered to help and gave her details. The woman who asked for help, later came back on the group discontent with the support she had received. Zanele expresses her frustration with the woman's public discontent and notes it as a reason other women may not want in the group. For the Zimbabwean diaspora, Moyo's (2009) study on a social media space called 'Inkundla', a popular cultural space for Ndebele Zimbabwean diaspora found that the platform was used as an independent source of information, interaction in real time with other Ndebele people and helped strengthen their cultural identities (See also Mpofu, 2013). Zanele's reference to the woman asking for help on the group is an illustration of how the women use the group for information and support. The extract also shows the contestations and challenges members face in negotiating social interactions. She adds:

'And today, there was another lady who posted saying that; at the [Zimbabwe] border, they are checking how much money you have, be careful how much you take out. Then another person posted and said; you just wanted to tell us that you have £10 000 pounds cash. She's thinking I am trying to help, and you think, what would I get from it? And then they would be deadly serious, and you get people supporting her saying; yes, you just wanted to show off that you have money. That group is full of all sorts of people, like my sister, has a very good job, I can't tell you her title, because you will know her, but she has a great job, she earns millions, but she won't say anything because another this thing about people thinking you are showing off. But this is closing opportunities for other people because if she posts her job and say, I work at this company and I am doing this and I am looking for people, a person judges that.'

McGregor (2009) notes that diaspora media and internet sites draw a larger interest among Zimbabwean diaspora in England than social groups that meet physically. The Facebook groups dedicated to Zimbabwean women diaspora provide opportunities for women from all over Britain to participate, share information and create a sense of community. Furthermore, Dekker and Engbersen (2014) suggest that social media networks

significantly contribute to migration and movement of people, as people share information in real time. However, they note that not all information that is shared is the truth and some platforms are used for illegal activities. Similar to the religious groups, the members of online groups must continually renegotiate their belonging and membership. McGregor (2008; 2010) argues that the Zimbabwean diaspora is fragmented across class, gender, and immigration status, economic and religious categories. Hence, Zanele's reference to the group members being 'all sorts of people' also demonstrates the differences amongst the women and how social media groups brings all these women together based on shared 'imagined' Zimbabwean community.

The Facebook groups also allow some women to create alternative strategies to staying connected to the 'imagined community' without physical contact. Anthias (2008; 2009) argues that boundaries of inclusion, exclusion, access and participation that create 'imagined' communities disguise contestations and fissures within them, which can lead to individuals identifying with a group and not feeling like they belong. After the challenges that Chipo faced with some religious groups as a divorced woman, she decided to adjust her social interactions with the Zimbabwean diaspora women and create new boundaries:

'For me, the solution is, I stay out of it, and the only thing I do is Facebook groups, that's where I see people and their stories. My life is outside the Zim community, people think that we are in the same boat, this is our life now, my life now, and I live it the way that suits me here.'

Due to her status as a divorced woman, Chipo did not feel welcome amongst the religious groups and created new social interactions and networks through Facebook groups. By creating new networks and boundaries for interaction with other Zimbabwean women, I suggest that Chipo is redefining her cultural identity and resisting social pressure to conform to gendered cultural expectations. The groups provide an opportunity to be part

of the collective in abstract ways and not face to face interaction. McGregor's (2008) research also found that not all of the participants engaged with another Zimbabwean diaspora. A lack of trust on issues of immigration status and deportation was a main barrier to building connections. Similarly, Ryan (2011) found that some of the Polish migrants excluded themselves from socialising with people from their country as they found the groups confining and limiting. Rufaro also shared why she wanted to tell her story and how they had started the Facebook group to support single parents who were struggling in the diaspora:

'Things I learnt from before, if I had known before, I wouldn't have taken the route, I would have done it better and I need to help other people. We have a group which I told you about, which is about helping single parents, on face book, we counsel each other there.'

The group A2* is a space where lone parents are supported and advised on finances, child support and other related matters. Rufaro's excerpt is about how through life's trajectory, women's social locations can change, and the women find ways to connect with others in the same position, supporting each other and redefining their cultural identities. In Moyo's (2009) research, he also found that apart from political debates, online platforms were also used for discussions on marriage, parenting in the diaspora, funerals, gender, and sexual identities. He argues that these discussions and debates demonstrated the complexities of the diaspora experiences and intrinsic time-space conflicts faced by diaspora communities. However, they are those who believe that social media has negative influences on women, and one of the barriers to participation was cyberbullying. Dee notes:

'Now, i don't go on there as often, before, I used to religiously go on Facebook, and stuff, and now there is a lot of bullying as well that happens, on the women to women, which i think is horrible.....I have said, if i go back on Facebook, I'm not going to concentrate on that, I'm just going to go there, use for me, and for my benefit and just, blank everything else there is a lot of drama.'

There are varying terms and definitions for online bullying (Akbulut, Levent and Eristi, 2010; Hinduja and Patchin, 2008). Willard (2007) defines online bullying as the practise of posting harmful or cruel content using digital communication devices. Dee's choice to ignore what she called the 'drama' shows how she negotiates her interaction and participation within these contested online platforms. On the reasons why she continues to be a members on the groups, she adds:

'Oh, yes, there was one that was for women on A1*. I was removed from that one (laughs). I had come off Facebook for 3 years and came back recently. Yeah, peer pressure made me go back on Facebook. Everybody was saying, you need to go back on FB, you have moved to a new area and you need people. But even now, I am not seeing the benefit of it because now, i get aggravated and agitated by things. Like that one on A3*, I don't remember, I think, a few years ago, there was this Brenda girl, who cheated with one of the lesbian's partner and it went viral. Yes, that's one, and stuff, and people on the group were like; oh, let's put money together and buy Brenda flowers. Then I was like in capital letters; WHAT? She committed adultery! If you had said to me let's put the money to give the hubby I said, I will personally raise the money myself, get the flowers and hand deliver them to him, so he is the one hurting. Let's just say, a day later I was out (laughs).'

Dee's extracts are an example of the reasons migrants may use social media platforms and the conflicts that may result. Croucher (2011) notes that migrants use internet social connections as part of creating interpersonal connections and learning the area's socio-cultural environment. Dee was encouraged to join Facebook groups to connect with other Zimbabweans in the area, however, she also noted the conflict she felt due to prior negative experiences in a different group. In contrast to the Facebook groups, Dee also shared her experiences in the WhatsApp groups for women:

'I travel quite a lot and i do go to those women things, married women groups, i am there and the singles groups I'm there as well. I gain the best of both worlds, and now when i meet someone now, i am not shy to say, you know what? This is who I am, you take it or leave it, and i think one of the reasons i am on this group on WhatsApp, for women. We have been together for about 2 to 3 years. It's been a struggle, there has been a few divorces, a few messes, you know when women are together, we started out 15 of us, and then we have changed a few, a few have left. But I have learnt a lot from that group of women because unfortunately, there have single women, which doesn't really help. Some of them have been married and divorced and they have children and they are now single parents and it's quite interesting when you learn other people's stories, it's very interesting and I think that group has helped me a lot. It's that we are all different, we are all

different and we all have very different stories to tell. Some things that i can't stand, somebody else can stand it. One's meat is another men's poison, but that you are not alone, that's the other i have learnt as well, that i'm not alone. When you hear some of the stories, on the group, you laugh, because you are like, at least mine isn't that bad as that one (laughing) yes, you appreciate your life, that person had it worse, i thought i had it worse, but that's a step too far.'

It is important to note how she differentiated between married women's groups and single women's groups. She sees these groups as different 'worlds' and benefits from the women's different views. Through their experiences, she learnt to be more assertive in her relationships. I have already established how the women's social media groups provided platforms to engage with other Zimbabwean women diaspora in Britain and create an imagined Zimbabwean community of women. I also showed how membership in the groups is contested and participants are continuously renegotiating belonging. Dee's extract further shows how life trajectories on marriage, divorce, children and sharing of experiences empowers women like Dee to reconceptualise their cultural identities and redefine their gendered relations. Therefore, I suggest that the women's groups also expose women to other views and beliefs that may challenge or strengthen their cultural identities. This is also echoed in Zanele's reflection on the women's Facebook groups:

'For me, Facebook has taught me and exposed me to all sorts of people, I never knew before there are people who actually think, that this is right. , There are people who don't think like us, who think that marriage is an achievement/ Like now, i have suffered when I am studying, but I am used to fighting on my fights, I have a very supportive hubby [husband] but I will be like, I want to achieve and handle my own stuff. But there are some women, who are just happy to be looked after by their husbands and just sit at home, like that.'

Research studies with a specific focus on migrants' use of social media platforms to reconstruct their cultural identities based on local, religious and global ideologies found that these platforms also provide spaces for cultural contestations (Gajjala, Zhang, and Dako-Gyeke, 2010). From this study's findings, I suggest that online platforms expose the

women's differences based on class, education, religious and cultural beliefs, though the purpose of these groups maybe to construct a 'community' as Zimbabwean women.

Scholars note the multiple ways different types of social media platforms are employed by migrant women. The extract is a demonstration of how these groups are used by the Zimbabwean women diaspora to connect with others and find support for their own studies. However, within these narrations, are also contestations within the groups.

Additional to being members of Facebook and WhatsApp social groups, the participants also had other social networks that helped them find jobs, settle in an area, and give them support. There is extensive research on the critical role that social networks play in facilitating migratory processes within migration studies (Harvey, 2008; Reynolds, 2010; 2012). Specific to Zimbabwean diaspora, there is emerging literature focusing on the use of social networks in facilitating migration, employment opportunities, providing support and sense of belonging (Bloch, 2008; McGregor, 2009; Thondhlana, Madziva & McGrath, 2016; Tinarwo, 2015). When Tinotenda migrated to Britain, it took two years for her and her husband to settle in London and advice from a friend helped them to navigate employment and immigration system:

'He tried to look for a job and then worked in [X company] this time, while he was looking for a job, we met my very lovely landlord, a couple, who told us that you know what? "Breakthrough in this country is hard, I know what you are going through. I came here as an engineer and did not work, so, I went into nursing and then sorted out my papers, for my stay for my family. So, I would advise you to do the same for your family, before you worry about work and other stuff." We thought that was good advice, so my husband went into nursing straight away, and then we got our stay straight away and then I was his dependent. He finished his nursing and secured a working permit.'

Tinotenda's husband was an auditor in Zimbabwe and struggling to find similar employment in Britain. Advice from another migrant helped Tinotenda's husband in gaining settlement in Britain, showing the role that social networks can play in supporting migrants find

employment and integrate into British society. The struggle to find work is not unique to Tinotenda's husband; Block, (2006) in her quantitative research with five hundred Zimbabweans in the UK and South Africa, found that participants in the UK had high qualifications and strong skills set, but struggled to gain employment in the fields in which they were qualified, resulting in downward occupational mobility. The use of social networks in employment were also found in Tinarwo's (2016) qualitative study with Zimbabwean social workers in Britain. She also found that social networks were integral to the participants' integration and settlement in the UK (see also Thondhlana, Madziva and McGrath 2016). Although these studies show the importance of social networks to migrants' settlement, I suggest that they can be confining and limit an individual's options, as advice maybe based on personal experiences only. This is exemplified by Chipo's experience of the struggles she faced looking for employment:

'I got married, had my daughter in Zimbabwe, then, came here in 2002, when things were getting pretty bad in Zim. Coming here was like in passing, it was like in passing, like, let's go and make some money. I had got a place to do an MBA in Australia and I was like, lets come here, do three months here, and then go to Australia, then go back to Zim. When you come here and how hard it is, the first few years. Then thinking about starting again, when you leave to go to Australia; I have a friend from Zimbabwe who has lived in this country for a long time, his mom came and he followed after, I can't tell you his name. He told me: "forget about looking for a job, you are qualified for. Just do nursing, it's what black people in this country can do, that's the only thing they can do", and I didn't want that.'

Chipo's friend advised her to seek employment in health and social care, as it was the only option for black people. This extract raises issues of racism and discrimination in employment opportunities for Black migrants in Britain. Research shows that racial discrimination and reduced opportunities for promotions and employment for ethnic minorities in Britain significantly contributes to reduced social mobility (Clark and Drinkwater, 2002). Specific to the Zimbabwean diaspora, staff shortages within the health and social care industry and targeted recruitment by employment agencies provided them opportunities for employment, to train as

nurses and social workers with guaranteed work permits (Chikanda, 2005: Hayes, and Humphries, 2004). I suggest that due to these specific opportunities, some Zimbabwean diaspora women have preferred to go into health and social care jobs and have considered other sectors of employment too challenging. Therefore, they may discourage others from seeking opportunities elsewhere. Anthias (2007) notes that one's networks based on shared nationality or ethnicity are not always positive for migrants. Additionally, for some participants, the networks were no longer providing the support and information they needed, compared to when they came to the country. Kofman and Rughuram (2015) in their analysis of gender migration processes note that though more migrant women dominate sectors like domestic work, social care and sex work, it is important to note that there are variations to gendered migration, based on country of origin and the skills of the workers. Apart from helping with employment, social networks also enabled some of the participants in their immigration journey. Rufaro's journey was enabled through friends who financially supported and cared for her and her son during her return journey to Britain.

'But, then it was me and my friend who applied; [for a job in Ireland] my friend was receiving my mail and she was responding on my behalf and she was trying to call me in Zimbabwe. You know, you could never get through, trying to call me. Then, after about six months, she's like: "did you know that the hospital is still waiting for you to come and work?" I said: what? and she said: "Yes, I have been talking to them on your behalf, and I have paid this and the other, whatever they were asking for and the paperwork. I have done your work permit; they have done it. All they want is for you is to come.'

The support that Rufaro's friend provided is an example of the role of transnational connections in providing financial support to enable friends and family to migrate (Eve, 2010). Another friend helped her when she came to Birmingham from Northern Ireland:

'Then, I thought, I have a friend, the one who was sending me money, in Birmingham, there is a coach going to Birmingham at midnight. I bought a ticket and took the coach to Birmingham. So, we stayed with them for a month and I'm thinking he (her son) should be in school, and now, then

they were saying, leave him with us, and I was saying I can't leave him with you, legally, you will get into trouble.'

In Ireland, Rufaro had a work visa, when she migrated to Britain, she became an undocumented migrant. Rufaro was caught between getting her friend into trouble for harbouring an undocumented migrant, her son missing school, and leaving with nowhere to go. The change in immigration status and resultant challenges was also found in McGregor's (2009) research with eighty members of the black Zimbabwean diaspora, exploring how immigration status and class impacts on employment, class identities and differences within the diaspora. McGregor found that owing to tighter immigration controls the number of Zimbabwean's in the diaspora who moved from regular status into irregular status increased. For undocumented migrants, she further found that social networks provided them with opportunities for employment within Zimbabwean run businesses in the diaspora. Other ways, through which social networks were important to the participants' lives was through provision of childcare. Chipso shares an arrangement she had with her friend:

'So you have that as well [childcare responsibility] because you have the responsibility of if she is going to a childminder, what time she goes to school, holidays, it's your responsibility as well, you do the bulk of it, for a time I didn't know, even now, I look back, and I wonder what he did with his annual leave days because mine went to childcare. I remember, a friend of mine, who has now moved to Australia, she used to live in Nottingham, and we had this arrangement, half term breaks, we would have the kids for a week, then the following half term, she would take my child to her house for a week. It worked for a number of years, that's how we managed.'

Chipso illustrates how lack of family support and high costs of childcare in the diaspora means that the women must find other ways to support each other. I will examine parenting in the following chapter.

6.5 Conclusion

The findings show that the women 's perceptions of the diaspora and how they navigate social and public spaces within is determined by three factors. Firstly, the women are socially located in contradictory ways, through the immigration system, which assigns them various labels, based on their migration journey. Additionally, due to the politicisation of immigration and label of 'immigrant', the participants are positioned as outsiders and experience racism and discrimination. Lack of attachment and sense of belonging led to some participants desiring to go back to Zimbabwe and their notions of home were one of hope and a better life. However, I also illustrated how notions of 'home' and attachment to these 'imagined places' differ for each individual.

One of the main themes emerging from this chapter was the contradictory relationships the women had with their cultures and its impact on their perceptions of the diaspora and reconstructions of their cultural identities. Though culture is not bounded nor fixed, a review of literature shows that migrants' cultural identities are narrated in essentialist terms as a way of justifying social hierarchies and the preservation of their identities against threats of racism and discrimination. The women had different perceptions of the diaspora and the participants' level of attachment to their cultures and diaspora were based on a binary construction of African (oppressive to women) and Western values (self-expression, and freedom). For some participants, Zimbabwe was home, and they did not feel like they belonged in England. For others, the two nations were in opposition to each other and in the diaspora space, they had more agency. These oppositional meanings of the diaspora and country of origin led to a conflicting and

contradictory sense of belonging. This dichotomy is pervasive in the women's narrations of life in the diaspora and formed the basis upon which they framed their experiences.

The findings show the tensions between cultural expectations, religious beliefs, and the women's right to their bodies. Transnationality of African Pentecostal churches impacts transportation of gendered cultural beliefs and practises across national boundaries. Additionally, the churches contribute to the control of women's bodies and their embodiment within religious spaces. Control of women's bodies and sexuality is affected by not only the patriarchy, but also women themselves, who invoke allegiance to their Zimbabwean heritage to control women. I argue that although some of the participants use their agency to resist or conform to cultural and religious expectations, this agency is mediated by external forces of a colonial legacy that pathologised their bodies and cultural practises. I suggest that the women use their bodies to resist certain cultural practices and expectations. Simultaneously, using their bodies to reinforce their naturalness, seen as 'Africanness' in the diaspora. Hence, the women's bodies become sites of contestation

In contrast, Facebook and WhatsApp groups were spaces where the women socialised with others and were able to create relationship with others based on their own terms. In this chapter, I have also demonstrated how the women created new social relationships and their useful to the women's settlement, employment, support and sharing information. The creation of these spaces was contingent upon race, class, availability of economic resources, immigration status and life circumstances that change one's social positioning. The participants employ various socio-economic and religious resources to, firstly, reconfigure their numerous social relationships, positionings as women to establish themselves against a hostile environment where some have experienced racism, exclusion,

and immigration struggles. Secondly the participants use the resources to negotiate multi-levelled I belongings, some of which are contested and contradictory. In the following chapter, I will further explore how the challenges to the women's ascribed, gendered cultural identities, changing social locations and contradictory perceptions of the diaspora affect their gender relationships and redefine their families.

Chapter 7

Reconfiguring the family dynamics

In this chapter, I examine the participants' reconfiguration of their family relationships focusing on changing gender relations, parenting, and the impact of transnational connections on these relationships. I argue that the negotiation of gender relations is a two-way process between men and women and the women shared their experiences from their standpoint. I will also draw from research on Zimbabwean men diaspora to demonstrate how contested the relationships are and the renegotiation process between partners. This chapter goes to answering the questions on, firstly, the factors that contribute to their construction of cultural identities in the diaspora. Secondly, I explore how their cultural identities are socially established and navigated in terms of family and personal relationships.

The chapter is divided into three sections.

The first section, Gender relations: changing social positioning is an examination of how increased access to jobs and financial autonomy changed their social location and thus impacted their relationships. Balancing work and domesticity were a main theme found in the study and participants reported the impact of their changing economic status as a driver for the change and (re)negotiation of their relationships. Some of the participants were in formal employment before settling in Britain, hence, I will contrast their experiences in

Zimbabwe and in the diaspora to identify the differences that enabled them to balance work-family and gendered cultural expectations.

In section two, kinships relationships across transnational borders, I explore and further the analysis of how relationships with kinships and extended family are contested across transnational spaces.

In the last section, Parenting 'in-between' spaces, I analyse how beliefs about the children's rights and the state's responsibility to families and children are interpreted and experienced by mothers. Furthermore, I explore the impact of state policies on their ability to parent their children. In addition, I explore how parenting in the diaspora, differs from parenting in Zimbabwe to highlight the women's challenges, recognising that not all Zimbabwean children are parented the same way.

7.1. Gender relations: Changing social positioning

In this section, I analyse the impact of Zimbabwean diaspora women's financial autonomy and increased economic resources on their gender relations. Firstly, I analyse how changing work patterns, impact division of labour. Secondly, I will explore how increased financial autonomy and shifted social positioning affects their relationships and how they renegotiate these contestations. The results in this study show that in the diaspora, the women's gender relations are disrupted as the women's social positioning in the family change. Based on these results, I argue that the women's increased participation in economic activities, changing social positioning and the need to balance work and the family becomes a source of tension and contention in their relationships. I first examine the impact of work patterns

on gender relations, followed by an analysis of the effects of women's financial autonomy on their families.

7.1.1. Changing work patterns

Though the participants had most of the caring role within the family, most of the women worked shifts with long hours and spent less time with their families. To explore issues of balancing work and family life, I start by analysing Dadisai's excerpt as it embodies in general, the principal concerns the women had about their relationships and work. She shares the changes to the women's lives:

'The difficulty of life in the adopted country is trying to adjust to the ways of life, balancing work and family life including our own African Values. Most women have failed to, and this has caused marriages to break down.'

The women are not only balancing work and family, Dadisai notes that women must balance work, family, and their 'African' values. I suggest that the African values alluded to by Dadisai are gendered cultural values that define women's roles within the family.

Mokomane (2014) notes that the culture of working long hours and lack of flexibility in working hours results in women being conflicted between balancing work and domestic life.

Tsikata and Amanor - Wilks (2009) concurs by adding that gender and socio-economic factors are crucial to analysis of gender equality as women have a disproportionate burden of reproduction and care work. Some of the pressure to conform to these gendered African values comes from women's religious groups as discussed in the previous chapter, where women were reprimanded for perceived inability to balance work and marital responsibilities. Uwakweh, (2014: 38) argues that; 'shared values in many African cultures

are the principles of negotiation, give and take, compromise, and balance'. Indeed, if the conceptualisation of African values is founded on principles of negotiation, thus, there is an expectation that the women will use these negotiation skills and compromise as a resource to help them in the adaptation process. For some women, working long hours meant that their partners had to help with domestic chores. Umi, from AFG group, explained how her relationship changed because of working long hours:

'Now we both go to work, and my husband must help at home. I sometimes work nights, and he is home'.

Another participant, Chido, from the same group added:

'Life in this country is very expensive, so, I can't just stay at home and let my husband work, we help each other'.

Umi and Chido's extracts demonstrate how both men and women renegotiate gender relations. Umi notes that her husband assists with domestic chores, while she is at work. In contrast, Chido works, as one salary is not enough to sustain the family. Mapedzahama (2014) conduct a comparative analysis of how mothers in Adelaide (Australia) and Harare (Zimbabwe) negotiated work and family commitments and employed semi-structured interviews with thirty women of diverse marital statuses, working in different industries. She found that the participants in both countries were generally responsible for most domestic responsibilities. However, the mothers in Australia struggled to balance work and family demands, even though their partners helped with some chores. In this study, Mai Makita, in the same group, also noted the changing work patterns and their impact on gender relations. She explains the difference between life in Zimbabwe and in the diaspora:

‘In Zimbabwe, there was a practice where you know that you work from eight to five, yeah? Yet, in this country, it can be, I am coming in, and my husband is going out. So sometimes we can spend even four months not seeing each other and end up with no relationship.’

Although women work in most sectors in Zimbabwe (Cheater and Gaidzanwa, 1996; Martin-Shaw, 2015), what is unique about the diaspora are the long hours that women work that put a strain on their relationships. Apart from Grace (a Psychotherapist), Chipso (a finance manager), Tinotenda (stay at home mother), Samantha (university student) and Zanele (an accountant), most of the participants worked shift patterns in the health and social care sector. I suggest that women are caught between work patterns that disrupt traditional gender relations and the new forms of gender relations. The work patterns in Zimbabwe noted by Mai Makita that allow women the ability to balance, work and family responsibilities was also found by Martin-Shaw’s (2015) research with middle class women in Zimbabwe. The participants were in formal employment and worked consistently from eight to five o’clock, giving them time to be home and care for their families. Similar concerns of balancing work and family were also found in Zontini’s (2004) research with Filipino and Moroccan migrant women and found that some of the participants found it difficult to balance family and work demands and felt torn between the two responsibilities.

Research on transnational families and gender relations indicates that increased migration and physical separation of families has resulted in the loss of traditional care and domestic support systems (Miller et al. 2006; Mokomane et al, 2014). Settlement in the diaspora also meant that some participants in this research lost their support network and the domestic help that enabled them to balance work, family, and cultural expectations. Grace, provides an example of her life in Zimbabwe having a domestic worker:

‘So, at the start, my mom used to work as a chef for a hotel and then, she left, and started working as a Personal Assistant for [other] companies. She also worked for CABS [bank] and then she decided, when I was in high school, she decided to go back to college and train as a teacher. So, she’s never stayed at home. She only stayed at home for 3 months, after giving birth to me. Yeah, she went straight back to work, so most of my life, I went to day-care. We had a maid as you do, my mom got this maid, she was Mozambican, she spoke Portuguese and she spoke Shona.’

In Zimbabwe, some middle-class families have domestic helpers that help care for the family. The employment of domestic workers dates back to colonial times and continued after independence, with the new middle- and upper-class black Zimbabweans, as a form of

embracing modernity (see Gaidzanwa and Cheater, 1996; West, 2002). Dee, a single professional woman also shared her experiences of living with a mother who was career oriented and the support she had that allowed her to work:

‘My mom was very career minded, my mom is very multi-talented, and she just took opportunity after opportunity. And then, at some point, she became director of a big company in Zimbabwe. It was amazing, I never lacked anything, I went to nursery, I had a nanny, I had a driver who would take me here and there, at school.’

Dee and Grace’s extracts illustrate how the employment of domestic helpers enabled their mothers to work. In Mapedzahama’s (2014) study, she further found that unlike the women in Australia who struggled with balancing work and family demands, the women in Zimbabwe relied on family support or paid domestic workers to help them care for their families, hence, enabling them to have a career outside the home. Similar to this study’s findings, Pasura’s (2008) found that gender relations were continually being renegotiated due to the demands of living and working in Britain. The study was a qualitative study research with Zimbabwean diaspora in Britain exploring how gender relations are renegotiated in private and public spaces. More importantly, he further notes the significant role of domestic workers in negotiating and balancing work and family life in Zimbabwe. While Dee’s narration is not representative of all Zimbabwean women and families, it illustrates the support available to some women in Zimbabwe, so they are able to work and care for their families.

Domestic workers not only enable Zimbabwean women to work, they also help maintain gendered roles within the family. Tinotenda, provides an exposition of the role of domestic workers in the negotiation of gendered roles. Settlement in the UK was difficult for her and her husband, who could not get the job he was qualified for. She compares her life in Zimbabwe and in the diaspora:

‘It took some time for me to adjust. I think, in Zimbabwe, you had house help. You didn't do everything. I was working, we were both working nine to five [.....]. ‘My hubby didn't like the maid to cook for him. So, the first thing I would do is to cook our meal, and then Sisi (the domestic worker) would do the washing up, but that was the only thing, and he didn't want his clothes to be washed by the maid. I did the washing myself and then she would do the laundry for the kids.’

To understand the division of labour between Tinotenda, her husband and the domestic worker, one must understand how gendered cultural expectations are employed within marriage. Wives are responsible for caring for the family including the husband. The domestic worker's role is to help the wife manage certain domestic duties. Extensive research has been conducted on domestic workers in Southern Africa (Bourdillon, Pfigu, and Chinodya, 2006; Naidu, 2010; Palmary et al, 2010). Review of literature shows that the relationships between the female employer and the domestic worker is more nuanced than just employment, as it is governed by power hierarchies and other socio-cultural factors (Nyamnjoh, 2005; Tsikata, 2015). Tinotenda's narration illustrates these nuances by showing how cultural beliefs governed her relationship with the domestic worker and the specific duties she performed in the family. Likewise, Martin-Shaw (2015) found that some of the participants in her study were clear about controlling the domestic workers' role in the family, reinforced through advice from their grandmothers and aunties. The relatives advised the women not to allow domestic helpers to cook the husband's food and clean the master bedroom for fear of having their position as wives usurped by the helpers. In this study, I suggest that for Tinotenda, the domestic worker's role served to reinforce the gendered roles, where domestic work was Tinotenda's responsibility and the husband's preferences were a form of asserting his role as the head of the home. Dee also provides another example of how domestic workers emphasise gendered roles within the domestic space and the changes that happens when they settled in Britain:

‘You know, my mom's marriage was interesting because, my mom worked and my dad worked and we had a maid, so the maid would take over the domestic chores in the house [in Zimbabwe]. So, when they came here, I must admit it was a culture shock, for my dad, because, he has to kind of realise that he had to get going here [help with domestic chores], things are not going to work.’

Settlement in the diaspora challenged her parents’ gendered roles in this case, ones that were reinforced by employing a domestic worker and her father had to help at home.

Tinotenda transposed the employment of domestic help to England and had three domestic helpers from Zimbabwe over two years. However, the women left her employment when they were offered better opportunities elsewhere. Consequently, Tinotenda struggled to care for her children, who were all under six years and she eventually became a full-time carer. By the time she had three children, Tinotenda would go back to Zimbabwe for three months at a time, leaving her husband behind:

‘So, after 3 weeks, I went back to Zimbabwe because I had no one to help me. I took the 2 younger ones to Zimbabwe and left the older one, who was in school. I had a six -year-old, a one - year-old and a new-born, so that was hard! So, my husband stayed with the older one and we couldn't take him out of school. Then I came back, and it was still manic.’

The comparison between Tinotenda and her husband’s negotiation of gender roles both in Zimbabwe and in the diaspora demonstrates how migration and settlement in the diaspora may result in migrants losing their resources and connections from the country of origin.

Ability to visit her family in Zimbabwe attests to the transnationality of the diaspora and the role of family. Additionally, the ability to visit family in Zimbabwe is also dependant on one’s immigration status and financial stability. Tinotenda visited Zimbabwe as often as she did because she had citizenship rights and the financial means to travel. In Zimbabwe, Tinotenda had her family and domestic workers to help, in the diaspora, she and her husband must renegotiate their relationship in ways that work for the family. Loss of family

connections and support networks is a theme I will discuss in the following section in this chapter.

Initially Tinotenda was not keen to speak about the tensions she faced with her husband over the challenges to their gendered roles. I felt that she was holding back and opened up about how having my son in the diaspora without my family had caused tension with my ex-husband as our son was colicky and cried all the time. I have discussed my positionality and influence on the research process in the methodological considerations chapter five. Tinotenda then acknowledged the tensions in her marriage:

‘I found that there was a big strain with our relationship because the baby wasn't sleeping, he (husband) wanted to go to work and I was home all day. He thought because I was home, he didn't realise that I am not just sitting around, he didn't realize that I was taking the kids to school, picking them up, cleaning and other stuff all day. Zimbabwe men normally don't understand what we do at home, because they don't do domestic work, but at that time, we didn't click, because his main focus was just he has to provide for us, as long as the bills were paid, and we had a home and I took care of the rest’.

In this extract, Tendai's husband saw himself as the breadwinner and the domestic space as Tinotenda's domain and responsibility. This clear division of space based on gender resulted in conflict between them. Additionally, maintenance of the traditional gender roles did not work for Tinotenda as she no longer had domestic workers to help her. Pasura (2014: 71) notes that gender relations and power hierarchies within Zimbabwean families is based on the men 'exercising control over property, money and decision-making processes within the household'. The men's control over the household is challenged when they settle in the diaspora. It is not only within marriage that gender roles are renegotiated, some of the participants who were single also shared their experiences of dating Zimbabwean men. Dee provides an example of balancing work and gendered norms:

‘Back home, we go back home, long time ago when mothers used to be housewives, fine, if you want me to do all that, then let me be a housewife. But don’t expect me to go to work and do the same job as you, and then come back home and expect me to look after you and everyone else. Who’s going to look after me? Yeah, I have lost a few guys along the way. I met one who blatantly said that if I went to work and he had his day off, I would come back home and they would be no activity on the stove, and then I was like, mate, that’s not going to work. It’s not going to work, how about you do something, even cooking meat? Even defrosting meat (laughs). They do take advantage.’

Notions of family and gender relations in Zimbabwe have transformed over time. I suggest that Dee, as a single woman in the diaspora has more power to negotiate gendered roles within her relationships. Being single enabled her the freedom to challenge her partners’ attitudes to domesticity and gendered roles. The impact of one’s marital status and ability to negotiate gendered relations was also a theme in Batisai’s (2016) qualitative study with Zimbabwean women in South Africa, Zimbabwe, and London. She employed semi structured interviews to explore how women navigate the diaspora and renegotiate their gendered relationships. She found that participants who were single had more power to renegotiate roles and disregard gendered socio-cultural expectations, resulting in more egalitarian relationships. I will further discuss cohabitation and negotiation of relationships in the following section. Additional to issues over sharing domestic responsibilities were concerns about what some participants perceived as Zimbabwean men’s inability to financially contribute to the family. Mai Thamu, WSG group notes:

‘The problem is that men [Zimbabwean] in England are lazy and wait for the women to look after them. The women are doing all the work (the other women agree)’.

Contrary to Mai Thamu’s views, research on diaspora men and employment opportunities show that there are institutional and systemic factors that may restrict men’s participation in economic activities. Pasura (2008; 2014) suggests that Zimbabwean diaspora men face challenges in securing employment in Britain due to their immigration status, as dependant of their wives and lower social mobility. These factors act as barriers to the men

contributing financially in significant ways. It is also important to note that barriers to employment and social mobility for ethnic minority men in Britain differs based on one's ethnicity, age, socio-economic status, and education. The current report from Office of National Statistics (August 2019) shows that there are more black-African/Caribbean men in employment than Pakistan and Bangladeshi men. However, these statistics are also contested, based on definitions of employment and the lack of breakdown of ethnicity of men who identify as African. Despite the challenges, Dee recognises that some men are changing their attitudes towards division of labour:

‘I think, in this country, I got a lot of brothers, friends, and male friends should I say who have had to adapt and have realised that you can't let a woman do everything.’

Though some relationships were transforming, conformity and non-conformity to what Dadisai called the ‘African values’ that define gendered identities was still contested among the participants. In summary, the changing work patterns contributed to the contestations and conflicts of balancing family responsibilities and work demands. A research comparison of Zimbabwean women diaspora in Australia, Britain and women in Zimbabwe showed that although women in Zimbabwe are in formal employment, the differences between the women in Zimbabwe and the diaspora is the loss of family support, inability to employ domestic workers and long working hours. These changes resulted in some women struggling to balance their work, family demands and cultural expectations. Important to the analysis of changing work patterns and its impact is how women's marital status is how single women had more power to renegotiate their relationships. In the following section, I will focus on how the women's shifting financial status affected their relationships.

7.1.2 Changing economic status of women

The analysis of the women's financial status and gender relations is premised on the argument that women increased financial resources changes their social positioning within their relationships, which in turn challenged traditional gendered roles. It was difficult to ascertain employment statuses within all the group interviews, but many of the participants in the study were in employment. I start this sub-section by exploring Chipó's experiences of her marriage and the challenges she faced as a result of her successful career. Her experiences provide an insight into how such challenges occur and the responses of both partners. Chipó and her husband were university graduates employed in their professions. When asked if her job and earning more money had any impact on her relationship, she noted:

'It did, the first few months were fine. I was doing the stuff expected, you know, cleaning cooking. The other thing is there was a time I was earning more money than him, double than what he was earning. I think, most guys don't like that (pauses). Suddenly, it affected the relationship, he started leaving all the responsibilities to me and it built a lot of resentment.'

Marriage is the cornerstone of African families and is a space where gender identities are contested, negotiated, and reconstructed (Oyewumi, 2000). Chipó still made attempts to maintain gendered role in her relationship, however, in protests to Chipó's material positionality, her husband abdicated his responsibilities and left both domestic and financial responsibilities to her. If gender relations are spaces for reconstruction of identities, I suggest that gender role reversal meant that both Chipó and her husband's gendered cultural identities had to be redefined. Pasura (2008) argues that men's unsettled authority in the home further threatens their masculinity and authority. It is important to note that

Chipo's husband was a successful engineer, who had progressed in his career.

Nevertheless, he felt threatened by Chipo's changing positioning in the family. The changing demands of the diaspora and negotiation of gender relations was also a theme in Chilangwa Farmer's (2013) comparative qualitative study with professional Black African women from South Africa and London. The study explored how the women negotiated, what she terms, 'hybridised' social positioning within the family and workplace. She found that the women found strategies to cope with the gender role reversals after their husbands quit work and became stay at home parents. The women in the study coped with the changed social positioning by performing all their traditional and cultural roles additional to working full time. Kandiyoti (1988;1998), in her influential work on gender and patriarchy, employs the term, bargaining with patriarchy to theorise on how women compromise and negotiate with cultural and social systems of oppression, in the process also upholding their cultural values. Furthermore, Uwakweh (2014) employs literary work of Buchi Emechete and Ama Aita Aidoo to analyse first generation African women diaspora's experiences and argues that negotiation of gender relations in transnational spaces is critical to the survival of the Africans family in the diaspora. In this study, Chipo explained the lengths to which she tried to prove her conformity to traditional gendered roles:

'There is that pressure because I think I went to the extreme, to prove it, to the point where you even washing his underwear. I would wash his underwear and cooked for him, to the point where I would go somewhere, and he would ring me and say why have you not cooked? My whole life became centred on looking after him and you are a glorified maid [nervous laugh] and in the end, I was like, you know, I am his maid [laughs]! I am his maid.'

Washing of her husband's underwear is significant as it is considered a signifier of intimacy, submission and one of the markers of being a good woman (Martin-Shaw, 2015). In Martin-Shaw's (2015) study, some of the participants explained the importance of washing their husbands' underwear to their roles as good wives, maintaining intimacy and a symbol of

submission. In contrast, in this study Chipo viewed this practise as demeaning, felt conflicted and resentful. I suggest that Chipo's extract demonstrate the complex realities and power dynamics at play in African women's everyday lives within the private spaces. By referencing, feeling like a maid, Chipo is emphasising her changed positioning within her marriage and as I stated earlier, domestic workers are in power relationships with their female employers, and in most cases, they are on low wages, may work long hours without any acknowledgement or appreciation of their hard work (martin-Shaw, 2015).

The economic status of women, changing social positioning and renegotiation of gender relations was also a theme for ZPG group. Some of the participants blamed women for not maintaining the social norms and gendered cultural expectations. This is exemplified by Annie's conversation with Patricia:

'It's unfair that men expect women to cook for them and take care of them when they both come from work, we have to help each other! If I am tired, he should be able to do the chores.'

To which Patricia, responds:

'Women from Zimbabwe, when they come to England, their behaviour is worse, they think they have more money and abuse their independence. Just because we are now in England, you are refusing to do your wifely duties. You must clean and cook for your family, even when you come back from work, and you are tired. In Zimbabwe you did it, so why is it when you come to England, you now want your husband to cook. You will find that with time, your husband will want to help. I come back from work and cook for my family, even if I am tired. You must do it. Don't ask your husband why he is not doing house chores, because then he will refuse and will think you are challenging him.'

She then asks her friend, Dudu to confirm what she said, Dudu agrees and notes:

'Tell her how many years we have been married. I have been married for 25 years, so, listen to us, we know what we are talking about'.

Annie is a single young woman in her twenties, Patricia and Dudu are in their forties and married. Patricia and Dudu treated Annie, like a wayward child who did not know anything. In this study, age difference was a factor in the participants' perspectives on gendered roles. Younger women were more prone to challenge gendered cultural values than their older counterparts. I propose that the age differences in perceptions on gendered roles is a result of the exposure of younger generations to global and feminist influences and changing ideas about gender and gender relations. Similar results on age differences on perceptions of gendered roles were found in Abdi's (2014) qualitative study with 102 Somali families in Minnesota (USA). Abdi (2014) conducted semi-structured interviews and group interviews with the families and focused on how employment opportunities and immigration status affected renegotiation of gender relations within the families. One of the main findings in the study showed that older women tended to agree with the maintenance of traditional gendered roles and the role of men as the breadwinner. In contrast, younger women tended to be more amenable to gender equality and subversion of traditional gendered roles. I also suggest that Patricia's comparison of women's responsibilities 'back home' and the need to continue with these gendered practises in Britain does not consider contextual differences.

Patricia was excited to share her perceptions of Zimbabwean women's lives in Britain that she asked me to speak to two Zimbabwean men who had attended the political rally on the challenges they were having with women. The men gave responses which concurred with her perceptions of Zimbabwean women diaspora's abuse of independence, however, the men's responses are not within scope of the study. Patricia also noted how women abused their independence when they became financially independent. It is thought-provoking that Patricia equates increase in women's financial resources with abuse of their

independence and refusal to adhere to traditional gendered roles. I propose that the notion of abuse of independence is reminiscent of colonial and patriarchal discourse on women's mobility, where women who migrated to the cities for employment were associated with loose morals and (un)respectability. Tinotenda also had strong views about how women's economic resources were causing conflict in their relationships, by giving examples of other women she knew:

'What I have found and I have seen most of the time, its, when women come here, they tend to earn more than their men, it's not an issue, if you are in a loving relationship and respecting both partners, but the problem is the Zimbabwean women tend to want to dominate the men, using their wages as a weapon. Yes, and which is not really fair (...) It just depends on the relationships.'

Mai Zindoga, RRM, group two, also notes:

'Women are more academic than men, and then get more money, where they think they are better than men.'

These extracts reveal women diaspora's divergent views on gender equality, women's financial autonomy and gendered cultural expectations within the diaspora. In chapter 5 I explored how gendered cultural scripts are produced and reproduced by women within families and other social institutions in Zimbabwe. I also demonstrated how these gendered cultural practises are reinforced through punishment and exclusion for women who do not conform. Following on from this argument, I propose that the negative views on women's success in relation to conformity to gendered cultural expectations in the diaspora serves a similar role of reinforcing the very gender hierarchies of power that constrain women's lives. Additionally, I suggest that the backlash some participants faced from other women on non-conformity to ascribed cultural gendered roles is based on the importance that is placed on families and the secondary role of work in sustaining the family. In African families, work is defined within the confines of its benefits to the family's welfare and not

individual pursuits (Mokomane, 2014; Yang et al., 2000). Hence, Tinotenda and Mai Zindoga criticise women who have an education, or earn more money as they view them as neglecting their responsibilities within the family and prioritising personal pursuits. The importance of the family and negotiation of gender relations was also noted by Tinotenda who explained how she negotiated her roles and responsibilities in the family:

‘It just takes you back to the biblical thing, if you look at the bible, Ester and them, it’s all about the respect with your partner and really understanding things. What men, for my perspective is in order to get along with any man, it’s to give him his utmost respect and at the same time, not demeaning yourself. You know, if he knows that you respect him and value him, he will do anything for you. My hubby knows that I work, when I work, he takes the kids to school. He prepares food for the kids, so, when I get home, it's not like I am starting from scratch.’

Similar to Dorothy who employed biblical reference to demonstrate how women in the diaspora had changed and could no longer identify as true Zimbabweans, the story of Esther is about how a queen uses her charm and wisdom to save a nation. In the story Esther used her wisdom against a man who plotted with other members of the council to get the king to destroy her people. I argue that Tinotenda’s referral to Esther in the bible is a way of exemplifying how women can use their wisdom and charm to get what they want in relationships. I suggest that Tinotenda’s views on women’s strategies to renegotiate gender relations in the diaspora is what is highlighted by Nnaemeka (1998; 2005) on the differences between western feminisms and African feminisms. She argues that in contrast to western feminism that advocates for resistance and rebellion, African feminists argue for negotiation and collaboration with patriarchy to achieve their aims. I suggest that womanhood and identity are negotiated in multiple ways and women are finding ways to use their agency, albeit in subtle ways, to renegotiate gender relations in the diaspora.

In chapter seven, I discussed how some women perceived the diaspora as a space for self-expression and freedom. However, expressions of identity differed based on context

and one's social positioning within each space. Chipo contrasts her feelings and expression of her identity at home and at work:

'I am a different person at work, than I am at home, I am freer, more myself. I feel I can express myself at work. I can be who I am without this cloak of culture, suppressing me, trying to conform to what's expected of me as an African woman'.

This extract brings to the fore issues of the dichotomy between the private and the public spaces. The dichotomy between the private and public spaces is about how women are located differently between the spaces and the impact it has on their cultural identities. For Chipo, the private space is defined by cultural expectations and where gender intersects with culture in defining her identity. She finds the domestic space limiting and oppressive and the workspace is where she can redefine her cultural identity without judgement and other identities are made salient. An examination of the women's narrations of work illustrates how women can be multiply positioned in contradictory ways and result in experiences of oppression and privilege at the same time (Campt and Thomas, 2008; Uwakweh, 2014). The shift in women's social positioning significantly impacted their partners, contributing to how the women responded to the changing roles. Eli shares how her marriage failed when her husband struggled to adjust to life in Britain and returned to Zimbabwe without telling her:

'He was here 2 days [timescale said to show that he was not in the country for a long time] and it wasn't like we had problems with the marriage, he didn't like it here (pause), anyway, he left, and I let him go and he left me! (Showing incredulity). I couldn't believe it, it was beyond my control, the morning he left, we were playing and everything and the next thing, he was gone! And I wasn't going to follow him to Zimbabwe. That's how the marriage broke up'.

Eli already had an established life and career before her husband migrated as her dependant. Pasura's (2014) study with Zimbabwean diaspora in the UK, found that when men felt emasculated and disempowered in their own homes, they found new ways to

reassert their authority. One of the ways to assert their authority was to return to Zimbabwe, where the men's social location would be restored. Similarly, Wong (2013) found that decisions for return migration was based on notions of masculinity, which were related to the men's ability to be breadwinners and the inability to provide for their families challenged their gender identities and return migration restored it. Wong (2013) findings were based on semi-structured interviews with twenty-five Ghanaians on return migration and the male participants came from patrilineal cultures, whose identities were based on their ability to provide and look after their families.

Not all the participants struggled with renegotiating gender roles. Some participants shared how their relationships were equal and they shared domestic chores. Samantha made a comparison of how she negotiated gender roles with her husband across transnational spaces:

'My husband's family is very traditional, such that they expect you to do all the work, you know, nothing has changed, essentially, the woman does all the work and the man doesn't. But the good thing is that this country has taught men to respect women, which in Zimbabwe they wouldn't do. For example, now we help each other out at home. Something back home, it would be the wife's job to take care of the child, the wife's job to cook.... but you find because of the situation and the circumstance, he's going to go to work and wake up and he's going to find out, well I can't wait for the wife to come back and cook, I just have to cook or else I will die of starvation. He's got no choice but to cook, even if he didn't like it, you know? It's about us coming together.'

Samantha accepts the conflicted positioning and expectations upon her as a wife and a woman. In Zimbabwe, she is expected to maintain her gendered role, as expected by her husband's family. In contrast, in the diaspora, her marriage is more egalitarian. Samantha's narration is instrumental in demonstrating the building blocks that create social structures that define gender and gender roles. Furthermore, the extract shows how gender and gender relations are negotiated within different spaces, in this case, in Zimbabwe and

England. I will discuss transnational spaces and the role of extended family in the next section. Samantha further adds:

‘I haven’t lost my identity because I still cook for my husband, I still do the cleaning, I still do the traditions, like (pause), giving water on my knees, washing his hands before he has his food Greeting people in a very respectful way’.

In previous chapter, I explored the different ways, the participants felt conflicted about some of the gendered social practises they felt subjugated women. Blunt and Dowling (2006) suggest that gender relations are shaped by an imperial legacy that created homes as spaces that are contested and continue to reproduce the discourses that reinforce those legacies. In this excerpt, Samantha, uses these cultural practises to strengthen her cultural identity. She expresses how she demonstrates her respect and submission to her husband through cultural practise of kneeling when serving dinner and because in Zimbabwe, food like sadza is generally eaten with hands, she also provides him with a small bowl to wash his hands before eating. Gender inequality within the private space are areas of debate and contestation within the different feminisms. Marxist and socialist feminists criticise the family as a source of women’s oppression and gender inequality (Evans, 1995; Lorber, 1997; Sommerville, 2000). In contrast, African feminists argue that marriage and family can act as a form of liberation and not oppression and women retain some of their cultural beliefs and traditions they see as assets to them (Arnfred, 2004; Ahikire, 2014; Nkealah, 2016; Chigwedere 2010). Hence, Samantha considers conformity to these gendered practises as a form of pride and reinforcement of her cultural identity.

The transformation in the conceptualisation of the family and traditional marriage customs also means that women no longer feel compelled to be married to establish their cultural identities (Pasura, 2008; Tevera and Mawere, 2014). Grace was a single,

professional woman who also found herself struggling with navigating relationships. When interviewed, Grace emphasised that she was a successful Professional in the process of buying a flat, drove an Audi TT and shares experiences as a single woman navigating relationships:

'The thing with Zim men, if there are successful, they want to control you or they will say, a woman who is too educated is a no! Don't get involved with her she will because you trouble. So, if I can drive my ideal car, if I can go out and buy that pair of shoes, handbag or whatever I want and I can afford it, when I meet you, I'm not thinking whether you have money to sustain my lifestyle because I already have my own money. So, I'm taking that off the table. Nowadays, I don't play! I think, ukarera imbwa nemukaka mangwana inofuma yekuruma (an idiom meaning, if you tolerate certain behaviours, it will cost you in the long run). I'm not going to pretend to be something I'm not. There was another guy, who said; the problem with you independent women are that... He then proceeded to tell a story; he was telling me this story of a woman who was really successful, then she met a guy that she liked and then she built him up, and I'm like, that's not my job. I swear to you, if you 38 years old, and you still don't have your life in order, there is no miracle that you are going to get. But I just think, I don't want that! And he said; that's the problem with you women, no wonder you are alone, I said; I think that's a good problem to have.'

Grace's life may not reflect a majority of Zimbabwean women diaspora in Britain. Yet, her successful career and financial autonomy provide insight into how single women employ their financial resources and independence to define their relationships. I discussed before in the previous section, how Dee, as a single woman negotiated division of labour and long working hours with her boyfriend, in this extract, Grace also highlights her independence and how she does not need a relationship to define her. By being self-sufficient and independent, women like Grace and Dee are redefining their cultural identities that are no longer tied to marriage and children. Tinarwo and Pasura (2014) concur and also found that the increased financial power enables women to redefine their relationships and choose to cohabit with their partners (kubika mapoto), a practice that was frowned upon by some participants in the Christian women's group, RRM. West (2002) notes that in Zimbabwe, colonialism and African religious practises buttressed patriarchal system of marriage and women's reproduction so, marriage and motherhood became part of a woman's identity

(Nyengele, 2004; Akujobi, 2011). However, participants like Chipso are challenging the centrality of motherhood and marriage to their identities in the diaspora.

Unmarried women may have more power to redefine their cultural identities and relationships, yet, for divorced women, their changed marital status and social positioning work to restrict their relationship opportunities. This is because of the stigma that is attached to being a divorced woman in Zimbabwe. Eli was a successful, divorced mother and her experience was mediated by her marital status and motherhood. After her husband returned to Zimbabwe, she notes:

‘I had to get over it, for myself, because I had to accept, I never imagined that I would (pauses), I felt that you grew up and got married. I thought it was automatic that you just get married, you have problems, but you just stay in there. So, I then, was shocked to find myself as a single parent, and men as well, boyfriends, saying why you won’t sleep with me, if you have a child already. So, you know, the expectation, that I do I have to pay cows for you? I said, actually, you pay more for me, because, you are guaranteed children, whereas if you are marrying a girl, you have no guarantees that she can have children. So, you don’t know, so, you charge more cows, you know! I have been told that why should I pay anything for you since you have been married before. Things like that! I find African men are more...I’m a fighter, and to some people, I come across as bitter and hard, but I don’t care. I’m just telling you where I stand! (pause) Men don’t like women like me’.

Payment of cows is part of the Shona and Ndebele marriage process. A comparison of Grace (a single woman) and Eli (divorced) ’s experiences demonstrate how gender intersects with culture, marital status and motherhood in the women’s contradictory social positioning and experiences of gender relations. Grace’s experiences show that there is an expectation from the men she meets that she should conform to gendered cultural expectations. In comparison, Eli as a divorced woman with a child is discriminated against and seen as second-hand goods. Differences in treatment of women in society based on their marital status and reproduction are based on cultural beliefs that place importance on marriage and motherhood. Hence, female headed families, as a result of divorce are considered a social

failure (Fidan and Bui, 2016; Manyonganise, 2015; Nkealah, 2016). These beliefs are then transposed to the diaspora and there is an expectation that all women will conform and abide by them. A comparison with matrilineal cultures shows that women's roles as mothers take precedence over their relationships and women are expected to do whatever they can for their children. Therefore, single parenting may not be judged in the same way (Wong, 2013). Although, women's sense of control and ability to effect change in their relationships can be constrained by cultural expectations, immigration status or financial constraints, Uwakweh (2014) in her research on gender, culture, migration and African family argues that African women employ various strategies to engage with the new diaspora space, conflicting social and cultural practices. Thus, I propose that property ownership is a strategy employed by participants like Grace, Dee and Chipso to negotiate their social positioning and spaces as single or divorced women.

In summary, employment opportunities in the diaspora, has changed their social positioning and given them financial autonomy and ability to renegotiate their gender relations. Yet, the changes in their positioning also has an impact on their male counterparts. The extent to which the women can renegotiate their relationships is also based on the ability of the men to compromise. It is also important to note how renegotiation of the gender roles was differentiated by age. The younger women were more open to egalitarianism than the participants who were older. In the following section, I will examine the women's relationships with extended family and their role in the women's lives in the diaspora.

7.2. Kinship relationships across transnational spaces

In this section, I analyse the participants' transnational connections with extended family, and the role they play in the configuration of gender, gender relations and by proxy their cultural identities. I will first examine the role of the extended family in the diaspora. Following on, I will then analyse how family relationships in Zimbabwe are maintained and the influence they exert in the participants' lives in the diaspora. The analysis of the participants' extended family is premised on the understanding that social relations are complex and constantly negotiated, thus the discussion on extended family across transnational spaces demonstrates these continuous negotiations and complexities. Findings from this study indicate that the participants still have strong links with family in Zimbabwe and for those who had settled status and financial means to do so, they visited their families regularly. These transnational links are utilised in many ways to maintain and redefine their cultural identities and as a tool to pass on their heritage to their children.

There is extensive research on how migrants maintain their transnational relationships and various theories have been employed to explain these connections (Anthias, 2008; 2012; Campt and Thomas, 2008; Vertovec, 2001). Specific to Zimbabwean diaspora, research is focused on the myriad ways that connections with families is maintained including sending of remittances (Bloch, 2006), transnational religious connections (Mbiba, 2009), political participation (McGregor, 2010) and use of social networks in adjusting to life in the diaspora (Tinarwo, 2015). However, there is little focus on delineating how Zimbabwean women diaspora employ transnational links in constructing or maintaining their cultural identities. In this study, the participants had varying views on

the importance of transnational extended family to their families and relationships. A common theme among the participants was on the role of extended family in mediating marital disputes. Mai Zandi exemplifies this, when she is discussing issues of domestic abuse within RRM group:

‘Well, in Zimbabwe your husband would hit you and you would not report him, here, this would be reported as domestic violence... in Zimbabwe, we have extended family to help when you have issues.’

Mai Zandi notes the importance of extended family in dealing with issues of domestic abuse, where they would be dealt with within the family and not necessarily reported to the police. Thereby keeping matters of the family private (Kamabarami, 2006; Manyonganise, 2015). I discussed in the theory chapter, the central role of kinship relationships to the wellbeing of the family. Thus, for some participants, a lack of extended family in the diaspora to arbitrate in their marriages was considered detrimental to families in the diaspora with increased rates of divorce. Domestic abuse in Zimbabwe is recognised as a social problem that is a result of patriarchal cultural practises, control of women and lack of access to socio-economic resources (Kamabarami, 2006; Makahamadze, Isacco and Chireshe, 2012; Njovana and Watts, 1996). It is interesting to note that during the group discussion on marriage and looking after men, one of the members, Mai Shonihwa shared how the group helped her to handle her husband’s temper. She shared how whenever, they had a physical fight, she would go to the toilet and pray. The group became Mai Shonhiwa’s extended family. Osirim (2008; 2012), in her research with African women diaspora in the USA found similar results where the participants in the study formed organisations that act as extended family and supported them in areas such as domestic abuse cases. Though, Osirim’s (2008) research was conducted in the USA, her findings and this study’s findings demonstrates the importance of women’s groups and organisations when they are a lack of extended family

to help with marital issues. Nevertheless, I suggest that some of the women's views on domestic abuse were counterproductive as they discussed domestic abuse as part of women's everyday experiences that had to be tolerated. In Zimbabwe, not only does the extended family mediate issues of domestic abuse, but they also facilitate the marriage process. Anne also shares the impact of the lack of extended family in the marriage process in the diaspora, when she tells a story of a woman jilted at the altar by her fiancé:

'I know of a Zimbabwean woman whose fiancé disappeared the day before the wedding and the woman had to go after him. Imagine that! What could she do? In Zimbabwe, we have a family, there are there to help you when you have problems. The guy would not have left, because the family would have sat them down and asked the man if he wanted to get and the guy would have told them no. But, in England, there is no one to do that.'

Another participant, Gogo Bhachi, from NCG adds:

'In Zimbabwe, you don't go straight to your mom and dad when you have a problem with your husband, you go to the aunties, they will sort out your issue'.

Mai Bhachi's reference to aunties, is a Shona custom where, like the mother in-law, the sister in-law (tete) is also an important member when it comes to family relationships and responsibilities. Bourdillon (1987) notes that traditionally, the sister in law had special authority over her brother's children as the bride wealth paid for her was sometimes used to pay for the brother's wife. Part of her responsibility is to mediate her niece's relationship and marriage process. Annie and Mai Bhachi's extracts illustrate how the dislocation of families has severed these connections and support the women had with extended family. Although the lack of extended family in mediating marriages and supporting families in the diaspora was an issue for some participants, I suggest that improved communication links allow family members in Zimbabwe to still exercise their influence and maintain gendered

cultural practises in the diaspora. Dee exemplifies this, when she shares her experiences with her aunties (father's sisters) who are in Zimbabwe:

'You are still in that way of thinking that for you to fit into society, and now vana tete vangu (my aunties) from back home, start hinting about relationships [asking] Is everything ok with you? So, you don't even have a child? Oh, gosh, no! And now that I am having that conversation more and more now, and I'm thinking maybe I should just have a child and get it out of the way'.

Dee is a very successful health and social care professional, yet the family are more concerned with marriage and children than her success. The findings show that certain traditions and customs that reinforce power hierarchies between women were also transported to Britain and renegotiated. Her experiences are reminiscent of Vee's account in chapter six where she detailed how gendered expectations are reinforced through enquires of marriage and children, once a woman reaches a certain age. Thus, Dee's extract exemplifies how these cultural practises are not constrained by geographical boundaries. The participants in the study did not only have contact with families in Zimbabwe, they were participants who also had extended family in England. Rufaro, Chipso and Ruvarashe detailed how the diaspora challenged their relationships with their mother's in-law. When Ruvarashe got married and was expecting her first child, she moved in with her in-laws, who were settled in England for several years:

'Then I moved in with my in-laws, living together because I was about to give birth. I remember, when he would come at some time and I would be sleeping, she would expect me to wake up and give him his food. And I used to find it very hard. He was ok with it, dishing food for himself, but because his mother was there. She would say why are you neglecting him? Then, I say, mom, I can't wait up until 11:30 when I must get up at 4, so, stay up late to serve him food only? I have cooked and left it for him, I'm sure he can dish it himself. He didn't have a problem with it, but his mom didn't like it. She would say, you have neglected my son.'

In the Shona custom, a woman returns to her parental home when she has her first child with rituals being performed to ensure the woman and her family's well-being (Bourdillon, 1987; Owomoyela, 2002). However, some of the rituals have evolved into baby showers with friends and family bringing gifts for the mother to be. Since, Ruvarashe did not have family in Britain, when Ruvarashe was pregnant with her first child, she moved in with her mother in law. In Zimbabwe, tensions between mothers in-law (amwene), sister in-law (tete) and daughter in-law (muroora) are extensively written about in various literary writings, for example, Dangarembga, (1989), Nzenza Shand, (1997), Vera, (1998). These relationships are governed by strict cultural rules that are hierarchically built on the seniority of the mother in law (Rwafa, 2016). Scholarly, research on mothers in-law and daughters in-law relationships have mainly focused on Asian family structures (Allen Dorf, 2006). The studies characterise the relationship as contested with power hierarchies and domination of the daughter in law by the mother in law (see Merrill, 2007; Shih & Pyke, 2016). Ruvarashe and her husband's work patterns meant that they both had to adjust, a theme I discussed in the earlier section. However, her mother in law felt that Ruvarashe had to put her husband first, regardless of the demands of work. The relationships between mother in-law and daughter in-law, is also located within the broader family relationships. Thus, the father in-law is the head of the home and oversees the welfare of the family (Bourdillon, 1987). To contrast her experiences with her mother in law, Ruvarashe shares her experiences with her father in law:

'The funny thing is that my father in law would cook, he used to cook. Father in law, when he finishes work a two, and gets home and there is no one home, he would cook. You will get home to cooked food (laughs) you would get home and he would have cooked all meals (...). One day, you know, my thing of being so outspoken, I had to raise it, (laughs) because she had posed a difficult question for me, that if your husband leaves you, what are you going to do? And I said, "To leave me for food? Then it means, it wasn't meant to be. If he can leave me for that silly reason that I didn't serve him food, then he never loved me'. Yes, I remember that, because it was the first months

when we were learning each other's characters. Now, she knows the kind of person I am, she won't ask such questions..... I found it so hard, that she was saying that, and that she was lucky to be married to a man who looked after her, but she didn't want the same for me. She didn't want her son to do for me.'

It is interesting that the father in law recognised that he needed to adjust and help in the home. This also illustrates some Zimbabwean diaspora men's changing attitudes towards domesticity. In comparison, the mother in- law enforced the cultural gendered expectations with threats of Ruvarashe's husband leaving her for non-conformity. I suggest that the reinforcement of gendered cultural expectations by the mother in- law illustrates how women contribute to the production and reproduction of gendered cultural norms. In Zimbabwe, Ruvarashe challenged her mother's differential treatment and expectations for her and her brother based on gender differences. Likewise, in the diaspora, she further questions the gendered expectations within her husband's family, which helped her assert her identity within the family. Ruvarashe's narration of her mother in- law and her acceptance of whom she is, leaves more questions than answers. One wonders if the mother in- law accepted her because she had been in England for a long time and was comfortable with her daughter in- law or whether she accepted her because Ruvarashe was quite a forceful woman. Zanele also shared about her contentious relationship with her mother in law in the diaspora. I use Zanele's narration to illustrate the contestation of familial relationships and their negotiation across transnational spaces:

'So, we came here, and my in-laws, (mom in law) came here a long time ago, she's a nurse. We started living here, they would come and wreak havoc, and she would lift up the phone and ring me and shout at me. For him, it wasn't that bad, but for me, of course, there was also the sisters, they have cash talk (sic). So, they would wait for when he was gone, and they would lay into me..... Do you know, my home is my haven, she came to threaten me? If my hubby wasn't there, she would have beaten me up. I don't know if I had been able to defend myself and beat her up, I'm not a violent person... And then that's the thing about African culture, it's ingrained in you that, you don't question what they do, no matter it's not right, you don't'.

Zanele's narration demonstrates the multiplicity of social and cultural contexts within which women must negotiate their multiple gendered roles i.e. Being a wife, daughter in-law, sister, professional and a member of society. Unlike Ruvarashe who questioned her mother-in-law, Zanele felt that she could not challenge her mother in-law's behaviour and cited social norms that dictate behaviour in social relations as a reason. In Chilangwa Farmer's (2013) research, participants also noted the pressure to conform to cultural expectations with their in-laws, especially, in cases where they were in more egalitarian gender relations. One of the participants in the research expressed how she felt compelled to be subservient when she was in the presence of her in-laws, as a form of respect for them and a different person as a professional at work. In chapter, seven, I explored how some participants felt that living in the diaspora had made them realise how their cultures were oppressive to women as they could not express themselves in Zimbabwe. In contrast to their assertions, Zanele's narration demonstrates the complexity of power hierarchies within Zimbabwean cultures, as there are some aspects of culture that imbue power to some women over others based on familial relationships and seniority. Additional to renegotiating family relationships in the diaspora, Zanele also noted how the family in Zimbabwe got involved in the dispute with her mother in-law:

'So, it didn't end there, so, she goes to her house and what do we hear? She took it to Zimbabwe, went to the aunties. But they all know her. She went to tell the sisters, I don't know what she said, but she went there and cried, and said; they shouted at me. She told that to her sisters. My dad, I told him that they said ndiri 'mhunza musha' (a destroyer of the home) and he was livid, and he was saying; you can't let somebody use a word like that because, now, it's worse than being called a witch. He is the one that then explained to me what that meant. He told me what it means and said; we are the ones who should say, we want a family meeting (tiri kuda dare) for what they said. You are the one who should be compensated.'

In the Shona customs, when there are disputes between mother in law and daughter in law, there are certain cultural processes that extended family must follow to resolve the issues. Narayan (1997) suggests that the conflict and power hierarchies between mothers in - law and daughter in-law are not personal conflicts; there are part of systems and institutions that define gender roles and women's lives. Hence, Zanele's mother in-law utilises these power hierarchies to restore what she perceives as an insult and sought recourse by invoking her seniority. I suggest that Zanele's narration of the mother in -law's response illustrates that settlement in the diaspora disrupts family configurations and how cultural traditions are negotiated across borders. However, improved technology and communications provides migrants with opportunities to engage in family practices in the countries of origin and vice versa (McGregor 2008; McGregor and Primorac 2010). In the diaspora, Zanele and her husband redefine their relationship with the mother in law:

'But now, my hubby was saying, because we had not set any boundaries and she didn't have any boundaries, she used to come and do whatever she wanted, she felt she could do whatever... We decided to just stay in our house, and they stay in their own house, and I used to treat her nicely like I would my own mom. But I keep myself to myself, if there are any family occasions, I will go there, and just pay my respects and I now have my inner circle, and that inner circle, like my sister - in - law (husband's brother's wife), she's not related to me, but I know I can count on her for whatever. I got my siblings, my sitters who are here, and I've made friends, white, Asian, So, I have defined my inner circle.'

Social boundaries and belongings are not fixed, but they are continuously being renegotiated over a lifetime (Anthias, 2000). In Britain, Zanele creates new boundaries of belonging between their nuclear family, the extended family, simultaneously retaining cultural expectations as a daughter in-law. Zanele further creates other multi-ethnic belongings that become her extended family in the diaspora.

It is important to highlight that although there are power hierarchies between mother in-law and daughter in-law, these relationships are not always contentious and conflicted. Allendorf (2006) argues that the continued focus on mother in law / daughter in law relationships as inherently conflictual results in essentialist notions of culture and stereotypes. Instead, family relationships are constantly being negotiated and shaped by active agents who may not always passively follow cultural expectations (Narayan, 1998). Hence, the extracts of the participants and their contentious relationships with their mothers in law are not reflective of all Zimbabwean diaspora women's relationships.

In summary, the findings in this section show the influences that extended family still has and how these relationships can reinforce gendered cultural expectations and behaviours. Yet, for some participants, the diaspora provides them with a space where that influence is redefined, and they can set new boundaries. Part of creating new boundaries and reconfiguring the family is through parenting. In the following section, I examine the challenges of parenting within the diaspora space.

7.3. Parenting 'in between' cultures

One of the main findings for the participants with children was the challenges they faced raising their children in a space with different approaches to child rearing and childhood. In this section, I explore the challenges that the parents faced raising their children in a different culture whose beliefs and values, were contrary to their own. This study consisted of mothers who left their children in Zimbabwe and were separated from their families for

years, due to immigration constraints. They were mothers who were raising their children in England within different types of families including, two parent and single parent homes, a common occurrence within the Zimbabwean diaspora. Parenthood for transnational families involves emotional, physical, and cultural changes that impinge on their ability to parent their children (Mugadza, Mujeyi, Stout, Wali, Renzaho, 2019). These challenges maybe a result of loss of support networks and extended family (Merry, Pelaez and Edwards, 2017). As discussed in chapter five, Mai Chiks described elements of culture that were important to their cultural identity and motherhood was central to that identity. In the Shona custom, not only does a woman have to produce children, mothers also have a responsibility to raise their children and teach them their cultural values and norms of their cultures (Bourdillon, 2006; Mbakogu, 2014; Owomoyela, 2002). Tinotenda, a mother of five children gave her views on why raising children in the diasporic space is challenging. At the time of the interview, there was a video of a Zimbabwean eight to nine-year-old boy who was recorded calling his mother names and being disrespectful to her. The video was uploaded onto social media platforms, raising debates on disciplining of children in the diaspora and Tinotenda gave the example of the child and the responsibility of the parents:

‘Moreover, mostly, I think, what I have seen is the fascination with the English culture, and then it will work for you to a certain extent, then you [end up] losing your values from Zim, I think, like bringing up the kids, you are implementing more the English way, and when things don't go your way, then you try to bring back your Zim culture,’ I think you have seen the video of the child from Birmingham (viral video of a Zimbabwean child who was cursing his mom and calling her names), you know it was terrible. You know social services should have been called, you know, that child was not being looked after. The little boy who was cursing, but then, you see what people are blaming English society, but it's not, it's what you install in that child, that life and you have a choice, to make’.

Tinotenda's views on successful parenting are based on a binary constructions of Zimbabwean values and British ways. The notion of culture for her encompasses values and norms that shape and govern the behaviour of children and young people. In the UK,

parenting approaches have transformed since the 20th century, a result of the enactment of the United Nations Convention on the rights of the child (1979). The implementation of the rights of the child contributed to the emphasis on child-centred approaches to parenting that are informed by Scientific evidence (Faircloth, Hoffman and Layne, 2013; Raffaeta, 2016). These individualistic parenting styles conflict with the participants' cultural values where the child is part of the family but is not at the center of the family. Mtetwa and Gwanzura (2017) suggest that defining a child and childhood in Zimbabwe cannot be separated from cultural values and systems that are based on communal interests. Therefore, parents may feel pressured to align with these interests, sometimes at the expense of their children. Consequently, it becomes problematic to separate the child from the society (Mutepfa and Chiganga, 2014; Dailey 2016; Shumba 2002). The values that define childhood and children's place in the family are transferred to the diasporic space, where there is an expectation of respect for elders and unquestioning obedience (Moyo, 2012; Mugadza, et al. 2019).

Tinotenda gave the example of the video and blamed the parents of the child for implementing a cultural practice that did not work, instead of maintaining the cultural values from Zimbabwe. She further shares her earlier experiences with one of her children's friends who was sexually abused, and this experience informed her attitude to parenting and the English culture:

'And then people ask you why your children don't do drugs? And then i said, because i don't do sleep overs. I have never and i will never do sleep overs. You might be the loveliest parents, but i don't know the dark side of you. So, i will not let my child sleep over because one thing we experienced, was, 4 years in this country, we met this South African lady, you know, because, we met at my child's school and then, she had a little girl, and she was married to a white man. So, they used to play together, then they decided to have a sleep over. So, she came over to sleep at my sister's house. Then she started talking about what the father does to her. Do you know she (the sister) phoned me, and asked; what do I do? Because the child is telling us strangers, and she is

talking about it like its normal... She was 6 or 7 years and he had been sexually abusing her for so long and then we called the mom first to come and my sister, if we had not reported it, we would also have been in trouble. But the scary thing was that we were thinking about our papers, we didn't have our visas yet and then the police were the scariest thing in your whole life and i said, you know what? Let's just call the police. Then the police came and everything, they questioned the girl, innocently speaking, told exactly what she had told us.... I don't know, and from that day, regardless, of how much I like you, no child of mine is going to have a sleep over.'

It is important to note that cases of child abuse happen in any society at any time, however, Tinotenda specifically blames the notion of sleep overs with such dangers to children, even though in this case, the child was abused by her father. I suggest that Tinotenda's account of the experience strengthened her negative views of parenting practises in Britain.

Furthermore, reporting the case to the police was made difficult by Tinotenda and her sister's immigration statuses and fear of deportation. To further address the tensions of raising children within a different context, she creates boundaries between her family and the outside world:

'So, for me, what i tell my kids is that; we might in this country, but the rules of the house, are different from the outside world, totally different. In my house, we do ' morning' and you can't come after 6, you can't come home after 6, we don't do TV Mon-Friday. I don't care what your friends are doing or have TVs in their bedrooms. If things were the same, i would be living a lavish life, but things are not the same, that's why, I'm here and then one thing you should know, is that we came in this country with nothing. This whole system is evil, and you are an immigrant child, so, you are not seen the same. So, at school, you have to work twice as hard, you are not going to be the same. The white children (mwana wemurungu) can work and not put any effort, but he can, not because he is working any harder, but because of his skin so, you have to work really hard. everything you do, you have to work hard, yes, now they start that's what, i have told my kids, we are Africans, and the way i was brought up, that's what i give my children- I will spank you with a belt, definitely, nothing changes, you just must behave. I think, there have seen it happening in Zimbabwe, most of the time, they are always at their best behaviour, I think'.

Tinotenda's account illustrates how race intersects with immigration status, class and culture in educational attainment. Mbakogu (2014) notes that parenting practise for African migrants is within a context of competing cultural influences, hence, Tinotenda further adds that as African immigrants, her children were disadvantaged and needed to work harder than their white counter parts. Tinotenda's views on maintaining Zimbabwean cultural

values on raising children are also echoed by participants in McGregor's (2008) research with thirty-seven Zimbabwean professionals in Britain. The participants in the study were diverse with some participants living with their children and others were transnational parents. She found that issues of parenting and education were central to the participants' accounts of their lives in the diaspora. Tinotenda sees the English and Zimbabwean cultural values as oppositional, therefore they cannot co-exist and be implemented in a Zimbabwean family. By reinforcing her 'African' values and creating boundaries between her family practices and external influences, she considers it as part of securing her children's success.

The women in the study had essentialised views on their cultures, gender and identity and this is also reflected in their narrations on parenting. It is interesting to note how the participants in this study and McGregor (2008) study framed their values as African values, like the notions of the African woman, which do not exist. Tinotenda's use of African values as a foundation for parenting assumes a singular enduring essence and the school becomes a site for cultural contestation. Dee also shares her family experiences that exemplify children's position in the family and its reconfiguration as a consequence of settlement in the diaspora:

'Now you know, and if you have children in the home, they tend to do most of the work, but now, I had left home, my 2 brothers had left home, and there was my sister, she's spoiled brat. She's 14. So, they are 3 of them left in the house now, and the dynamics, the last time I went home had changed (laughs). it was interesting to see the dynamics in the house and how it had changed, I was like wow! she is the youngest, and she's helping to clean, and my dad is getting more involved because before, if the children were there, he wouldn't do anything. I wouldn't expect my father to do any work, if the children are there. I wouldn't expect him to Hoover when I am there.'

Dee grew up in Zimbabwe and compares the way she was raised in Zimbabwe to her sister who was raised in Scotland. In Zimbabwe, the children would be responsible for domestic chores and in Britain, her father was helping with domestic work. The belief that parents

would lose their cultural values if they adopted some of the parenting values of the country of settlement were also found in Mbakogu's (2014) research with African migrants in Canada. Mbakogu (2014) conducted three sets of interviews with African parents and to explore their parenting practises, across different cultures. She found that the African parents were afraid that by adopting the Canadian ways of parenting, it would result in their children being wayward and dropping out of school. The negative impact of implementing cultural values in parenting that did not align with their own Zimbabwean values was also echoed by Tendai, RPG group, who blamed the parents for the difficulties they were facing with their children as they had not taught them their culture and language:

'Women bring up children not knowing their Zimbabwean culture or language, how can they expect the children not to talk back when you raise children the English way and then why expect that the child will listen and not talk back, when you have not taught them our ways.... Of course, it won't work'.

Sarah agrees and adds:

'I agree, it's difficult raising children in the UK and we should stick to our culture (chivanhu chedu), we shouldn't just come here and copy the English way in this country, it doesn't work'.

Bhabha (1997) defines 'in-between' spaces as those spaces where different cultures meet and the processes that are produced in the articulation of cultural differences. These sites become contested and the participants must negotiate and navigate through them. The participants articulate their different social location by upholding their cultural values and the benefits to the children, in the process reinforcing their own cultural identities. Sarah and Tendai's extracts demonstrate their assumptions that only their culture will work in raising well adjusted, respectful children and that the 'British culture' is not effective in raising children in the same way. Balan, Mahalingam and Molina's (2009) study with first generation Indian immigrant women professionals in the United States of America (USA)

also found that the women constructed a narrative of motherhood that positioned them as better mothers than American mothers. Mbakogu (2014) concurs and argues that the contestation of parenting 'in between' spaces, results in migrant parents upholding their cultural values more and having an antagonistic relationship to prevailing cultures of the country of origin. In this study, I suggest that the preservation of their cultural values and 'Africanness' is a strategy to cope with discrimination, racism and exclusion in the diaspora space. The concern with maintaining their cultural values was also about discipline. Issue of discipline was also found in both McGregor (2008) and Mbakogu's (2014) studies, where disciplining children was a contentious issue with their participants. Teachers who participated in McGregor's study felt that the lack of discipline was a challenge for them, as they had come from a country where teachers could beat the children to instill discipline.

However, other participants had a different experience and views on the issue of spanking children. Anne, a young woman (20s) with no children shared her views:

'You know that hitting children is child abuse. The way children are raised in Zimbabwe, where they are to be seen and not heard is so wrong. I get so uncomfortable when parents hit their children. I was raised in a family that was very loving. We were not spanked by our parents. So, when I see a mother hit her child it really upsets me (just then, a woman whose child has dropped her food, is smacked) See? why is she hitting her? It was not her fault that she dropped her food.'

Anne's personal experiences and response to the issues of disciplining children indicate the differences in raising children among families, even in Zimbabwe. I suggest that her views could also reflect age and generational differences in raising children. Raffaeta (2016) notes that parenting practises differ even within the same ethnic groups, therefore culture may not necessarily define parenting practises. Furthermore, Tettey and Puplampu (2005) argue that the notion of labelling African ways of discipline abusive homogenises diverse cultures and families whose practises differ. Raffaeta (2016) further adds that the labelling of

African ways of discipline may also be a result of employing western conceptions of parenting as a standard for good parenting practises, further marginalising African diaspora families. Another participant Mai Zindoga, RM group, expresses her views of disciplining children in Zimbabwe:

‘In our culture, in Zimbabwe. We spank the children with the belt, and they keep quiet (others agree). In this country, if you spank your child, they call social services. We cannot even discipline our own children... our children do not belong to us; they belong to the state’.

A systematic review of research on migration and parenting in the UK and USA by Raffaeta (2016) found that it is not only cultural differences that impinge on parents’ relationships with their children, state policies on children’s rights were also perceived to create barriers to parenting. He further notes that the child centred focus and politically led agendas on parenting and families resulted in the family becoming the site for negotiation between the role of parents and that of the state. For the participants in this study, this contestations makes them feel disempowered and with rights to their own children. Mai Chigubhu also supported the notion of state services ‘interfering’ in family matters. She notes:

‘In a way, it was not much of a shock [coming and settling in the UK], but at the same time there were other things that completely blew us away....issue of disciplining children, it was the biggest shock ever, because we had known that a child listens to their parents and if they don't listen, they get spanked and then when you come here, there are too many rules and regulations of which we do have to respect them, because they are other people who abuse the system and hurt the child. For us at home, children were disciplined and not killed’.

The participants view state policies as a mechanism to empower children, in the process disempowering the participants. Mai Chigubhu recognises that though they may not like the policies, they still need to respect them. I propose that the issue of child safety and discipline for these parents is also about the tensions and mistrust of the system based on children’s rights and cultural differences. For example, the case of the death of Victoria Climbié highlighted issues of cultural differences in child protection social work, particularly

when delivering services to migrant families and communities. Garret (2006) argues that racism and immigration status contributed to Victoria Climbié's neglect by service providers. Additionally, the lack of staff training on the challenges of migrant parents including racism, immigration status and cultural differences causes tensions within families and between the family and services (see Smith, 2003; Ferguson, 2005; Raffaeta, 2016). The tensions and mistrust of the system based on children's rights were also expressed by Vida, who adds her discontent not only with a spanking of children but the stigmatisation of immigrant parents when children commit a crime:

'The biggest issue for me is about children. [...], that a child has rights. Having rights to leave home because, they don't like being disciplined and they say, me I am going. They are giving them accommodation, put them in flats. But then, when these kids do something wrong, they start saying a child from an immigrant and yet, they took him when you tried to discipline them.'

Not only are the families struggling with parenting, Vida also notes that they have to negotiate ascribed identities of 'immigrants' and the negative discourse that impacts their children and families. In this study, what is different about the women's experiences of parenting are the cultural differences in family structures, the processes that maintain these structures and the role of the state and external organisations in influencing these processes. Thabiso, from WSG group, a social worker running a charity in London shared her experiences:

'I am pained when I see Zimbabwean mothers having their children taken from them. I have a case now at work of a woman, whose child was taken by children's services and I have been helping her and praying for her child to be returned... It is really hard in this country'.

Tettey and Puplampu (2005) note that African modes of discipline can be criminalised by law enforcement and interrogated by Social services, which may result in families being unduly targeted. The fear of social services results in parents feeling powerless and disempowered. Nevertheless, not all the participants, agreed with idea of spanking as a

form of discipline.

Not all parents lived with their children, other aspects of parenting that were discussed by the participants were around experiences of transnational parenting. Zontini (2004) notes how transnationality transforms the definition of the family and parenting, as families maybe spatially separated by migration. In the previous chapter, I discussed Mai Bhachi and Mai Kwashi whose children were still in Zimbabwe and they had not seen them in over ten years, due to their immigration status, Mai Bhachi notes:

My child, leaving your child is not easy. A child needs their parents to be there for them’.

Mai Bhachi’s quote illustrates the conflict migrant parents may feel as they leave their children so they can have a better life. This tension is also shared by Rufaro, who after being interrogated by an immigration judge who had told her she was not a good parent for leaving her child in Zimbabwe. When I asked Rufaro how she felt about what the judges had said, she answers:

‘I said to her, you don’t know how hard it is, to choose between sitting in the house with your child starving, so you can be there with him and going out to work away, so you can feed him and school him. Choosing the present twenty-four hours over your son's future, you don’t know anything, and I asked her, do you have any children? and she said no, and I said, that’s why you compared my son to a dog. If you had a child, you wouldn’t say such a thing’.

Rufaro’s response to the immigration Judge demonstrates the tension she felt within herself. A study on Turkish migrant women in Germany found that migrant mothers redefined normative ideas of mothering to include the sacrifices they were making to support their children as new notions of ‘good mothering’ (Erle, 2013). In the UK, women asylum seekers and refugees face challenges that constrain their ability to care for their children across transnational spaces due to the complexity of the asylum system that may

take years for an asylum seeker to be granted refugee status (Madziva, 2016; Madziva and Zontini, 2012).

Palenga – Mollenbeck (2013) suggests that transnational parenting brings into questions, issues of morality and responsible parenting, which can result in the stigmatisation of migrant parents. In her autobiography on her experiences of the asylum system in Britain, Gakanje (2019) notes how the separation from her children impacted her mental health and she felt guilty about leaving them, even though she was forced to flee Zimbabwe. I suggest that the immigration judge's questions about her son and leaving him in Zimbabwean further stigmatise migrant parents and create tensions between (im)migrants who leave their children in their countries of origin to provide for them and the immigration policies that have separated families (Madziva, 2016). Madziva and Zontini (2012) conducted qualitative research with Zimbabwean asylum mothers and Filipino labour migrants in Southern Europe and found that the women struggled to provide for their children and family reunification was delayed as a result of the long processes and the government's hostile policies that acted to deter asylum claims. Additional to immigration issues and parenting, racism was also a factor that parents had to contend with. Rufaro also shares about her son's experiences, and the impact it had on his wellbeing:

'The racism, my son got abused at school, I got abused at work, it just went wrong. I resigned, and I remember I collapsed, passed out at work. At that time, I also found out that he was being bullied at school. he was being made to sit in a corner at school during lunchtime, by himself and he was the only black child in the class, and he was the genius of the class. so, they were completely ignoring him. and I heard him crying in the shower. He used to go in the shower and turn the shower on as if he is showering, so, he could cry.'

Rufaro's responsibilities to her son was the key driver for her struggles to get citizenship. She tells her story as a woman with agency who challenged and resisted structural inequalities and discrimination. The British Education Research Association (BERA) notes that within UK education, race, and ethnicity continue to be the determinants influencing children and adults 'academic achievement and social interactions. Collins and Solomons (2010) argue that agency exists within structures of dominance in specific contexts and constraints. Rufaro uses her agency within a constrained situation to improve her situation for herself and her son and being a mother is what drives her. Rufaro is finally accorded the right to remain in the country and was given a house in Wolverhampton:

'All I know is that I am a mother to that boy and the whole world has not given to me an opportunity to be a mother to him. I don't know. He says, ah, when we came here, he used to walk around and say, mom, this is our own house? our own door? and I would say, yes. He would say, where we don't ask permission from anybody? And I said yes, and he said, and I can choose my own bedroom? and I said, yes, whichever room, you want. because we had been though whatever, just pick any bedroom. he then says, I can pick my own bedroom. Then he went outside and said, yes, and it's nice it's got black people everywhere because in Ireland, he had not seen a lot of black people, it was kind of affected him. He would stand there (by the window) and see a lot of Black people walking about, and he would say, so I can make black friends? I would say, yes.'

Rufaro's experiences demonstrate that some of the challenges of parenting are not only related to different cultural values, but also immigration policies intersecting with race in providing parents the opportunities to care for their children. Research by Clair et al., (2014) investigated the lived experiences of eight Zimbabwean and Congolese women, asylum seekers in the West Midlands. Some of the participants had left their children in Zimbabwe and some had their children with them. The participants talked about having to be strong, as they were going through a difficult process. The participants positioned themselves as resilient and drew from their identities as mothers to keep going. Rufaro positioned herself in similar ways and talked about her experiences in ways that showed her agency to fight for her son.

Additional to family connections in the diaspora, parenting practise of the participants were impacted by their transnational connections with family in Zimbabwe. I stated earlier in the chapter, how transnationality was a key theme throughout the participants' narrations. These connections are also part of the social spaces that the women must negotiate (Faist, 2000). What is distinct about these transnational connections is the socio-cultural practises and expectations in Zimbabwe that may conflict with the women's ways of life, as evidenced by a narration by Ruvarashe who had travelled to Zimbabwe to visit her family:

'Recently, you know, like, the arguments we had, my son was sick and had a fever and he was so hot, like, 39+. You know, you take off his clothes and leave him with a nappy, so he cools down. She said, you are leaving the child getting cold and i said, its fine, he's not cold, he is hot, his temperature needs to come down, he will end up with a high fever, if he's still hot. So, her sister was there, and my mom says, this one, leave her, she's argumentative, you can't tell her anything, she does not listen. I'm like, i can't deal with this. So, i was like, mom muri kuti ndine nharo (you are saying I am argumentative), if i had been home in England, i don't live with you, if i had taken him to the GP, they would ask me why he's wearing warm clothes, they would take off his clothes. She then she says, your problem is you think you know everything and I was like, you know what, you end up telling each other zvinhu zvinobhwa (crossing the boundaries of respect), these are my kids, let me do it my own way'.

Firstly, Ruvarashe's example of an experience with her mother illustrates the everyday conflict that can arise between the participants and their families in Zimbabwe because of different social and cultural practises and how participants navigate these contested relationships. However, it is important to note how Ruvarashe's relationship with her mother was always contentious as noted by her mother who labelled her argumentative, due to her disagreement on what the mother was suggesting. Pessar and Mahler (2003) argue that women's transnationality must be considered within power hierarchies within which they are embedded and constructions of gender and gendered identities. They further add that these socio-cultural power dynamics can either constrain or enable women to sustain their transnational family connections. The exchange between Ruvarashe and her

mother is an example of social norms that govern relationships in Zimbabwe. There was an expectation that she would listen to her mother and her defiance is seen as disrespect. Thus, her aunties encourage to just do what the mother says, as a sign of respect.

Overall, the parents felt that British values were ineffective in raising well-adjusted respectful children, while acknowledging its influence on their children. The findings show that within narrations of parenting, the participants employed the oppositional narratives between 'African values' and British values in their parenting practises. This dichotomy enabled the women to reject British values and uphold their own values as superior and, in the process, essentialising and reinforcing their cultural identities. There were participants who blamed the parents for trying to implement the British ways of life and it did not work for them. In contrast, they were participants who blamed the British child welfare system, which interfered in private spaces and regulated parents, through schools, thus disempowering migrant parents. I used different parenting experiences of the participants to illustrate the diverse parenting challenges that the participants faced, not only did they worry about imparting their cultural values to their children, immigration policies, racism, pressure from transnational family intersected in the women's parenting practises.

7.4. Conclusion

In this chapter, I set out to further explore how the women's gendered essentialised identities are negotiated within their family institution. The chapter on belonging and (un)belonging established that for some women, the diaspora was a place they could free themselves from what they felt were constricting cultural demands placed on them as

women and reconceptualise their own identities. The family is considered the bedrock of socialisation, constructions of identities and how they are shaped and negotiated and reproduced. In this chapter, I analysed the factors that contribute to how the family is reconfigured and the socio-cultural processes within. I also noted how the women's experiences of their families were different for the participants based on marital status. Thus, their experiences bring out different aspects of negotiating gender relations in the diaspora.

One of the main themes in this study was how the private spaces are contested as gendered relations were questioned and were (re)renegotiated. The women were multiply positioned in ways that contradicted their social gender norms. The findings show that issues of gender and gender relations are still defined by binaries between men and women, African tradition/ western influences and women's subsequent location in the gendered relationships. I propose that these essentialised positions are standpoints on the continuum and are being constantly renegotiated. These binaries are extreme points of a continuum where women can move, place the marker at a different level depending on the 'space'. Some of the participants challenged the established cultural gendered norms, yet others reinforced their traditional gendered roles and saw it as a marker of success. Not all the participants from the individual interviews were married, participants who were divorced had different experiences of relationships. Their experiences provided an insight into how dominant narratives of the real Zimbabwean woman influenced men's expectations. Additionally, divorced women with children were treated discriminated against and viewed as damaged goods. Therefore, the findings show how marital status, culture and gender intersect in the social positioning of women in the domestic space.

I argued that the challenge to gender relations are not only a result of women's financial autonomy, but also changing work patterns. Some of the women had professional jobs before migration and what changed in the diaspora were the work patterns. Some women were working long shifts as well as the men and their traditional gendered roles were renegotiated. Some of the pressure comes from other diaspora women, who equate diaspora women's financial independence as a threat to their cultural identities and by proxy to their families.

To better understand how and why the women's changing social positions were impacting on their gender relations, I made a comparison with working women in Zimbabwe and showed the strategies in place that allow them to participate in the public space and maintain their responsibilities at home. These strategies include domestic workers, who are integral to African middle-class families that allow women to maintain gendered roles. The female employer's responsibility is to then balance the role of the domestic worker, the space within the family and maintenance of gendered roles. I established using some of the participants' narrations how the lack of this support in the diaspora was challenging to couples who were used to having domestic workers and other support in Zimbabwe. Not all the relationships were conflicted and contested spaces of negotiating gendered roles, as some participants had partners who were willing to share domestic chores and other responsibilities.

I also analysed how transnational connections are a tool for reinforcing gendered cultural expectations. I specifically focused on transnational relationships as part of reconfiguring the family and not as part of the participants' transnational social networks. Transnational connections play a crucial role in the (re)negotiation and reconfiguration of

the family in the diaspora. Connections with families also enabled them to be involved in resolving marriage disputes.

Additional to (re)negotiating gender relations, the participants also discussed the challenges of parenting in the diaspora. I established the importance of motherhood to Shona and Ndebele customs. The findings indicate that firstly, the parents idealised their parenting practises and positioned themselves in opposition to British parents. Generally, the mothers felt that the British values and systems were not effective in raising their children. I suggest that racism; discrimination and ascribed identities of 'immigrant' which alienated and marginalised some participants may contribute to their attitudes towards British parenting practises. Secondly, the women felt conflicted over raising children in a place where the state and child welfare institutions are involved in children and young people's upbringing and their ability to parent their children as they wished. However, they were also participants who blamed Zimbabwean diaspora for incorporating British values in parenting and losing their Zimbabwean values. These arguments were presented in essentialist ways, where cultures and cultural values are distinct entities that cannot co-exist. However, I suggest that the findings show how cultural differences are renegotiated and sometimes painfully co-exist. In the following chapter, I will answer the research question on the socio-economic resources that participants employ to reconstruct and establish their cultural identities in transnational spaces.

Chapter 8

Symbolic Practices and Markers of Culture

In this chapter, I answer the research question on identifying the socio-cultural resources that the participants employed to reconstruct their cultural identities across transnational spaces and explore how the participants employ these resources. Therefore, I will examine how language, music, food and other cultural values and practises are employed in reinforcing the women's cultural identities and connections with Zimbabwe. The chapter is divided into two sections. The first section, language as part of cultural heritage analyses how the participants employ language to reinforce their cultural identities and part of their heritage that they pass onto their children. For most of the participants, their language was central to their cultural identities and for those with children, it was imperative for their children to learn their language as part of their heritage.

The second section, cultural values, and material practices of identity examines how the women use food, music and other cultural values resources/scripts to reconstruct and establish their cultural identities within transnational contested spaces. The participants had opposing experiences and understanding of their cultures, therefore, they selectively employed aspects of available cultural resources to reconstruct their cultural identities 'in between' spaces. Collins (1990) suggests that women in the diaspora do not abandon their traditions and cultures, instead, they draw from them to redefine their social locations and positioning. It is important to note that the use of material resources is mediated by one's class, socio-economic status, and immigration status, which determines the resources the participants employ in their everyday lives.

8.1. Language as Part of Cultural Heritage

In this section, I will examine the participants' use of language to reinforce their cultural identities, differentiate themselves from the 'other' and pass on their heritage to their children. Language as tool for transmitting cultural knowledge was essential for all participants. However, in this chapter I focus on the process through which parents transmitted their language to their children. Language is an expression of culture and identity and serves as a tool for communication and representation of oneself and other symbolic objects (Bradby, 2002; Joseph, 2004). Joseph (2004) defines language as 'a tool that encodes and stores culture as knowledge' and also tied to citizenship and national identity, for example, in Britain, migrants need to take English tests as part of their citizenship application process. Both migrants and settled communities employ language as a cultural boundary marker that defines group identity and sense of belonging and is also used as a tool to pass on their cultures and traditions (Edwards and Temple, 2007; Joseph, 2004).

Participants like Dee, Grace and Eli considered their language as part of their cultural identity and reflected on its importance in relationships. Although questions of interracial dating were not part of the interview process, the participants who were single or divorced were keen to share their feelings regarding the maintenance of one's cultural heritage. When asked what aspects of her culture and life in Zimbabwe she has retained in the diaspora, Eli notes:

'You know, when I have dated foreign people, I kind of get lost, he has his own values and I have my own. He is a white guy, I get lost. whereas, here we can talk in Shona, and we can like, you

and I are conversing about lots of things, in common i Yes, and on my part, it's because I want to, it's for me! it gives me a sense of identity'

Eli's extract clearly shows how language is tied to her cultural identity, that she wants to maintain and sees interracial relationships as a threat to her identity. Questions on language, cultural difference and identity are central to Social Scientists and Cultural theorists, (Hall, 1997; Bulcholtz; Hall, 1997). Hall (1997) explored the interconnection between identity, culture and the role of language and argues that In chapter three, I examined the concept of culture and provided a definition of culture that encompasses the symbolic and the material elements of culture. Thus, language is part of symbolic practise that produce and share meanings and creates a sense of belonging to a group. When Oyewumi (1997; 2004; 2005) made her arguments on gender conceptualisation and gender hierarchies in African contexts, she employs the Yoruba language to demonstrate how language is important to discussions of gender and cultural identities and the limitations of English in delineating these identities in English. There were similar sentiments from Dee when she shared about dating outside her ethnic group:

'That's why if i would settle with a Zimba [Zimbabwean man] because, if i say uri benzi [you are crazy], he understands exactly what I would have said (laughs) exactly, what I have said! Coz, chirimi chamai vangu [my mother tongue] you tell murungu [white man] that "you are crazy!" and they will be like "yeah, whatever!" <laughs>. If you use those words in Shona, there isn't that word that will hit the point. Say it in Shona unyatsonzwisisa [and you will definitely get it]. You can't say that in English and still have the same effect. It can't! They don't get it.'

Dee talks about how certain meanings would be lost if she was in a relationship with someone who did not speak her language, meanings that are central to identity and effective communication. Dee's example of how she and her cousins had failed when they set themselves the task of speaking Shona all day illustrates the embeddedness of English in some of their lives. Dee further adds:

‘Well, we tried to do an experiment with my friends and cousins, like, “can you spend the whole day speaking pure Shona, without using English?” We didn’t last a minute. We didn’t last a second <laughs>. Although, I am Shongrisha <Laughs>. I speak Shongrisha, even when I meet someone from Zim, I can’t help myself but speak Shona. I instantly switch to Shona, even at work, ndotonyara [I get embarrassed] coz, I can’t help myself that I am using Shona.... So, it’s my mother tongue, it’s just something I know’.

Dee also shows the importance of her language to her cultural identity and how it helps her negotiate her relationships. She emphasizes the importance of expressing herself in her mother tongue in her relationships, thus she prefers dating Zimbabwean men, who share her cultural beliefs and language. However, when she shares about her ‘social experiment’ and the inability to speak ‘pure’ Shona with her cousins, I propose that her use of ‘Shongrisha’ to describe herself is a fitting term, as it describes the intercourse of culture and language through colonialism and the resultant identities that are currently being reconstructed and negotiated in the diasporic space. She uses the term ‘Shongrisha’ to represent the mixing of Shona and English when one is communicating. Issues of language, culture and colonialism in Zimbabwe are widely discussed by Ndlovu, F. (2016), who notes that African languages continue to survive transnationality and the onslaught from ideas of citizenship and learning one’s country of settlement’s national languages. He further argues that the African diaspora are an essential component of establishing African languages across regional borders. Dee expressed this change in African migration and language preservation by noting:

‘I think, vanhu kudhara [lit. long time ago people] they never used to go to diaspora, we never used to appreciate being us. Whereas now, we are away from home, most people are very much away from home and that’s how they relate to home.’

Additionally, in the diaspora, she employs Shona to reinforce her cultural identity in a space where English is the only national language and migrants face exclusion and discrimination which challenges their identities and sense of belonging. Of all the participants, Grace was one who was proud to be bilingual, as it gave her opportunities to integrate and feel ‘accepted’. she notes:

‘I like the fact that I have the dual heritage, I say, yes, my childhood was in Zim, my grown life is very British. I like the fact that I’m bilingual, I like it and I really try.’

In contrast to other participants who accentuated their Zimbabwean heritage, Grace, identified herself as of dual heritage and considered both English and Shona as part of her cultural identity. For those with children, the ability of their children to speak Shona was central to their cultural identities. Ruvarashe taught her children Shona and encouraged them to only speak Shona in the home:

‘I think that it’s stuff like knowing your language because my language, Shona, is part of my identity. I have tried, and I think I’m winning with my kids for them to understand Shona. All my kids were born here and speak Shona very well. And we make an effort that when they are here, we say, No, English!’

Ruvarashe’s narration shows how her language is a key element of her identity and the family space is where the children are socialised into their parents’ heritage and language. Farr, Blenkiron, Harris and Smith (2018) conducted qualitative research with Spanish new mothers in inter-ethnic partnerships living in Britain and found that language learning was central to the children’s socialisation into the mothers’ cultural beliefs and values. Language becomes the tool for expressing one’s cultural identity and sense of belonging (Foucault, 1980; Lacan, 1977; Rassokha, 2010). I suggest that Ruvarashe’s further ban on the children speaking English at home served to create boundaries between their private space (home) and the outside world. Banning the children from speaking English in the home gives Ruvarashe power to implement her rules and impart her culture to her children. However, she recognizes the competing cultural expectations and demands on her children:

‘Of course, sometimes we do speak to them in English, and also because of environment, but we encourage them to speak Shona and no English. Like, all along, we would have a reward system for the best Shona speaker of the week. Yes, it pushed them, it really pushed them. It worked with the first child, I stayed with him for one year so he could speak Shona when he was in nursery. But the middle two started nursery at nine months, so English was like their first language. We still continued with both, and it worked very well. They can speak both languages. Uyu <the baby> you can notice that he can understand Shona, but answers in English. So, we pushed them; now, they speak Shona,

like in Zimbabwe. Even in Zimbabwe, they are surprised that these kids live in England, and they speak Shona like this <laughs>. I am fortunate, that my mom in-law is here and hubby's brothers and sisters; and I have my sister and her kids, who live close. We visit each other nearly every weekend. So, there is this interaction with people who understand Shona. So, their Shona quickly improved because of that.'

Ruvarashe created a space where she could teach her children Shona and reinforce her cultural identity. However, she recognises that they live in a society with different languages, systems, beliefs and values and the children have interactions and influences from other people within various institutions, i.e. nursery and school. To counteract these influences, she employs the reward system to ensure that her children learn Shona and continue to use it in the home. Similar struggles and strategies of teaching children one's language and employing various methods to encourage children to speak the language were also found in Farr et al.'s (2018) study with Spanish mothers. They found that some participants struggled with transmitting their language to their children and had to find strategies to ensure that the children spoke their language. One of the participants adopted a language learning method that she consistently used in her home to get her child to learn her language and heritage.

In this study, the children's ability to speak Shona was not only about cultural heritage, but it was also about their interaction with other family members in Zimbabwe; therefore, being bilingual provided an ability to participate in both worlds. Eli also talked about teaching her son Shona and the struggles she faced. When I asked her if there was anything that was important to her that she had retained from Zimbabwe:

'Yes, my language. When my son was still a baby, I managed to teach him Shona. But the time he went to nursery, he started speaking English and then, saying what's kaka? (what's milk?). Now that he's older, after this visit to Zimbabwe, he wants to learn Shona. Now he's like "teach me; speak to me more." It would be easy, if I lived with someone and we spoke Shona all the time. I try to get him to speak Shona, and hopefully, with time, he will learn.'

Similar to Ruvarashe, Eli's son also went to nursery and lost his ability to speak Shona. Eli's extract illustrates the competing demands on language learning, in this case for the children who interact in other institutions outside of the home. Research studies show that migrants teach their children their language as a way of maintaining intergenerational and transnational relationships (Farr, Blenkiron, Harris and Smith, 2018; Koven, 2007). Vera-Larrucea (2015) conducted a quantitative study on the experiences of second-generation descendants of Turkish migrants in Sweden. She employed surveys to examine their sense of belonging, constructions of identity and transnational connections. She found that the young people have multiple transnational belongings and varying degrees of emotional attachments to these spaces, as some participants rarely visited the parents' country of origin, even though they identified with the culture and could speak the language.

Departing from these findings, I suggest that though Ruvarashe's children speak Shona, visit Zimbabwe and engage with family in the diaspora, they may not necessarily have a strong emotional attachment to Zimbabwe relative to their parents' attachments and sense of belonging. It is also important to note how British immigration policies can limit migrants' access to these transnational resources. Only those with the right of abode in the country can travel and visit their families in Zimbabwe.

The issue of teaching children one's language and passing down of cultural values and beliefs is also a contested process. Not all participants taught their language to their children. Tinotenda felt guilty about not teaching her children Shona and viewed it as a loss of cultural values and identity. When asked about how settlement in the UK had impacted her life, she responds:

‘You know what when I came here, you lose some of that culture. One thing I regret is that I never gave my kids my language, that’s one thing I regret <laughs>. That’s the thing I wish I could do, teaching my kids Shona. So, I’m hoping that over the summer, she <her youngest daughter> can pick up quite a lot of the language.’

Tinotenda’s youngest daughter is two years old and in nursery; during the interview,

Tinotenda’s daughter spoke to her in English and Tinotenda would respond in Shona. At the time of the interview, Tinotenda and her family were planning a trip to Zimbabwe and she hoped that her daughter would pick up the language a lot more than she was doing, as they spent more time with family members and reinforce her cultural values and traditions in them. Tinotenda’s feelings of guilt over not teaching her children Shona, were also found in Farr et al. (2018) study, where some of the participants’ children failed to grasp their languages and used mainly English in their responses to their parents. These participants felt that they had failed in transmitting their cultural heritage to their children.

Tinotenda tried to teach her older children Shona when they were younger, and she had been unsuccessful. Although her children’s ability to speak and understand Shona has improved over the years, they do not speak it as well as she would have liked. In her discussion on the importance of teaching the children Zimbabwean languages, Ruvarashe, referenced a discussion on one of the women’s Facebook groups, where a member posed a question on the importance of teaching children their languages. She notes:

‘I saw the discussion on A1*. We are not going to admit to that! We just say, what purpose does Shona serve? Is there anywhere where children learn in Shona here? You know what? It’s not about that. It’s part of our culture, chaiyo chaiyo [our real culture]. That’s our identity! When they (her children) went home, they found it hard to play with other kids because they couldn’t speak Shona. They would refuse to play with other kids, because of that! They felt excluded, they couldn’t fit in. It pushed them again, for them to understand that, it’s important to learn Shona and where is the harm? It’s their culture! That is our culture! He [her son] speaks Shona so well that you would be impressed. He was mocked by other kids in Zim. From then he decided to learn Shona. For some people on A1*, they don’t understand it. They don’t even go to Zim with their children because circumstances are different. For some people, it’s the fact that they like it when people say her child does not speak Shona when they go to Zimbabwe <laughs>, but you don’t know how your child feels about being with other children and not understanding what the other children are talking about.’

Ruvarashe's narration of the group discussion also shows the contestations of teaching their children Zimbabwean languages in Britain, where some women questioned the practical uses of the languages and others, like Ruvarashe consider it a cultural necessity. All the participants had connections with family in Zimbabwe in one form or another and for those who had the right to remain in the country, they were able to visit family in Zimbabwe. Hall (1996) argued that language, culture, and identity are intertwined, and language creates boundaries between one group from another. Bloch's (2008) research with five hundred members of the Zimbabwean diaspora in the UK found that social connections were also maintained through visits to Zimbabwe, which reinforced their transnational links and relationships (see also Pasura and McGregor, 2008; Pasura, 2011; 2014).

The idea of language and identity within African cultures is contested. Ndlovu (2016) in his research on African Australians and their categorization based on language and nationality problematizes the use of language as a marker of African identities. He argues that African languages, as they are known today, are part of the colonial inventions and projects of knowledge that were created as part of the colonial administration to facilitate control and learning in schools. Shona as a language was an amalgamation of Zezuru, Karanga, Ndau, Manyika and Korekore. He further adds that before 1931, Shona as a language and as a concept to define Zimbabwean cultural identities did not exist but was imposed to create a homogenous cultural identity called Shona.

In conclusion, one of the key ways that some participants strengthened their cultural identities was through transmitting their languages to their children and for the participants with no children, they reinforced their cultural heritage by desiring to be in relationships with men who could understand their language. However, I have demonstrated the paradox

between the women's languages as being a central component of their identities and the historical creation of languages like Shona through colonialism, hence, illustrating the linkage between the past and the present and the shifting notions of cultural identity. In the following section, I further examine, other components of the socio-cultural resources that the women utilize in their everyday lives.

8.2. Cultural Values and Material Practices of Identity

In this section, I will examine how, apart from language, the participants also utilised food, music, their cultural values, and practices as resources to maintain their linkage or relationship with Zimbabwe and memories of 'home'. Davis et al. (2018: 3) suggest that diaspora employ various available cultural resources, from their cultures and from within the space they inhabit to 'symbolically create continuity between the old and the new identities'. It also serves to differentiate them from the 'other'. However, the food and music employed was based on class differences and availability of the resources within one's area.

In the diaspora, the women choose the cultural and social values and practices that they feel are positive in reconfiguring their relationships and creating their spaces and sense of belonging. Ruvarashe notes:

'<laughing> I think, the thing that I have incorporated is about greeting people and being a human being anoziva zvaanoita. But in terms of things like genital mutilation, and something like that, No! And it's not because I live in this country, it's because it's something I have always been against because it's one of those things that I struggled with when I was growing up, being told that it was something I had to do; and I was like, "why?"'

Ruvarashe tries to clarify that her resistance to female genital cutting is because of her personal feelings about the practise and not because of being in the UK. I propose that she

felt the need to clarify her position due to the accusations that women were taking up western values and rejecting their own. The fact that she can resist or use some of her cultural values and practises as tools to redefine and reconceptualise her identities is a testament to her agency that she feels she has in the diaspora.

Additional to teaching her children English, Ruvarashe shared some of the symbolic practises that she has taught her children that are important to interaction with individuals of different ages. She taught her children about respecting their elders and how every man was to be addressed as uncle and every woman was to be addressed as aunty. The respecting of elders was a central theme for the participants who were parents, as they felt that it embodied their cultures and identities. She says:

‘For us, I remember my children asking how come we seem to be related to everyone. We then decided that his aunties are no longer aunty, its tete, babamunini, ndibabamunini, [Shona variations of aunties and uncles depending on familial relationships]. We saw that they were struggling, kuti ndibabamunini and mukoma wangu ndimama. It’s made their life simpler, because, you go to church and there are a lot of women in the church and they are all ‘aunties’ and he won’t know who the ‘aunties’ are that we don’t visit, we just see them at church, we go to a party, “say hi to aunty”.’

The issue of respect was also discussed in Chapter nine as part of parenting in between spaces. It is interesting to note that Ruvarashe used her language to teach her children the different relations in the Zimbabwean family and how there are different terms used for the different relationships. I propose that not only is she teaching her children about their cultural values and cultural identities, she is also showing how kinship relationships are important to African cultures and families that English language cannot capture. She goes on to give an example of the conversation she had with her neighbour on the issues of respect for elders:

‘This little one knows that the white woman next door is called aunty. She would say to him, “I’m not your aunty”, and I said to her it doesn’t matter and explained that in our culture she can’t call you Diane*, you have grand kids. She was like; “oh really!” and I said; yes, it’s just our culture, it’s a form of respect. I find it hard to call her Diane because she’s the same age as my mother, I can’t.’

Ruvarashe’s conversation with her English neighbour demonstrates how spaces are negotiated with others from a different culture. The extract also shows how Diane, as a native of Britain, also negotiates relationships with diasporas. Experiences of difference was also articulated by Vaida, when she talks about her neighbour and her children calling her by her first name:

‘For me the issue of being called by first names is an issue, like the child from next door, when she sees me, who is only 4 years old, when she sees me and starts calling me Vaida? Vaida? Because my kids start copying her; <grunts> why can’t she just call me aunty? [Some women in the group agree].

Sarah, from the same group agrees and says:

‘What I have realised is it’s not the issue for white people [calling by one’s first name] only, even the North African people have different ways and the things they do is different from us, because the issue about being called by first name. I have a friend from Senegal, her little kids, whenever they saw me would say, Sarah is here! Sarah is here! I ended up telling them, I am not Sarah, I am Sarah to your mummy, but I am aunty. That friend of mine, I didn’t hide it from her, I told her that I didn’t like it when her kids call me by name. They should say “aunty Sarah”, that’s fine. I would never allow my children to call her by her first name.’

Vaida and Sarah’s extracts demonstrate how they negotiate their relationships with other people from diverse cultures. For Vaida, it was her white British neighbour and for Sarah, it was her Senegalese friend. The diasporic space is defined by Brah (1996) as consisting of social relationships where multiple subject positions are juxtaposed, contested, proclaimed or disavowed. Bhabha (2015) further argues that the meetings of cultures can challenge normative dominant hegemonies. In this study, the normative social interactions and processes are challenged by the participants and new processes of negotiation are created.

Issues of respect as part of cultural values was also raised by Rufaro, when she shared about her culture and the conflicting feelings due to her previous experiences:

‘There is a lot, believe me; I think, as Zimbabweans, we are very respectful people. It’s unfortunate when it’s not there.... If you had come before and he [her son] was here, you would have seen him, he would have sat there, greeted you: “how are you? how is home? how is the family?” He would have offered you a drink. That’s Zimbabwe.... That’s my own Zimbabwe, that I keep here. So, there is a lot of values, Zimbabwean values that I have instilled in him and he’s got that Zimbabwean strength as well. He has to be strong.’

Rufaro has family in Zimbabwe that she would like to visit, but due to past experiences is fearful to visit them. Instead, she draws values from her culture, which she has passed onto her son and that has strengthened her cultural identity and connection to Zimbabwe. Rufaro draws meanings from her cultural values that have helped her to redefine her cultural identity and come to terms with the trauma she and her son suffered in Zimbabwe:

‘The way I look at it, it’s the same way in Zimbabwe; they say, like your parent is your parent, your mom is your mom, even if she were a prostitute, or a witch, she’s still your mom.’

The use of the concept of a ‘mother’ embodies the strong cultural links Rufaro has with Zimbabwe. As discussed in the theory chapter, African feminists argue that motherhood is central to women’s identity and is associated with nature and life (Lewis, 2004; Owen, 2007). A mother has biological connection with her child and that bond is one that is considered unbreakable and is the foundation of one’s life. Hence, when Rufaro compares her feelings, using a mother and child relationship, she is emphasising strong ties to Zimbabwe no matter what she experienced before.

Use of socio-cultural resources was also determined by class and other individual experiences. Although, class was not explicitly discussed in the group’s discussions, the individual interviews exposed how class determined the socio-economic resources some

participants utilised to redefine their identities and sense of belonging. When Grace talked about labia elongation and its perceived importance in relationships, she noted that:

‘Even in my sexual life, I have ever met a Zim guy who has ever asked me about it [labia elongation]! It’s like, I think some of them don’t even know about it! I think, people from long ago I don’t know, or maybe again, it’s that social class thing. If you date certain type of guys from the rural areas, they will want it, high density, they would be mindful of that. I’m like, no, I ain’t doing that!’

Labia elongation is a cultural practice in the Shona custom, performed when a young woman has her first period and involves pulling of her labia to elongate it, as a rite of passage into womanhood (Bagnol & Mariano 2008; Mano, 2004; Venganai, 2017). The purpose of the practice is suggested to enhance the husband’s sexual pleasure. Grace’s rejection of these cultural practises is class-based, and she views the practice as a requirement by men from lower social classes. Class was also associated with the food and music that participants like Dee used to strengthen their cultural identities and connection to Zimbabwe. Dee notes:

‘I am that person that cooks sadza on my own. I cook my sadza with zondo rangu [cows’ feet] or oxtail, then ndorova chi high fields changu [sit on the floor and eat my sadza]. I love my sadza and I think I talked about it... If there is anything from my culture that I carry, it’s the food, though ndiri musalad [I am from a middle class family]; I don’t eat a lot of sadza, I eat sadza only <laughs> white, I don’t eat remhunga [Sorghum] just white sadza’.

Sadza is a staple food of Zimbabwe, which is made from ground maize meal, and is served as the starch component with meat or vegetable stews. Dee eats sadza and meat stew, yet class determined the type of Zimbabwean food she eats in the diaspora. In Britain, various products from Zimbabwe are available in different parts of the country, with Zimbabweans travelling for long distances to buy the products (Pasura, 2014). Regarding music, language was central to the music from Zimbabwe Dee listened to in Britain. She notes:

‘For me now, its, it’s the music, because when I was growing up, I was a snob. I used to listen to radio three (laughs). Now, I listen to any Zimbabwean music. I have made it a lifelong plan to learn

to dance 'bhasikoro' (A Zimbabwean dance associated with local music sung in local languages). Yes, and I learnt it and I dance, and I learnt it in my 30s.'

The rise of global consumption has shaped material consumption in Zimbabwe and in the diaspora (Belk, 2000). Music and dance are central to spirituality and identity within the diverse ethnic customs in Zimbabwe. However, there is limited research on Zimbabwean dances and their representations and meanings within political, social and spiritual arenas (Gonye 2013; Welsh-Asante, 2000). Bhasikoro is a modern dance, influenced by global forces and contact with other cultures. Studies on music in Zimbabwe have employed different qualitative methods to explore traditional music and its role in Zimbabwe (Barnett 2012; Chikowero 2015) the rise of gospel music (Chitando, 2002) and the impact of globalisation on urban music (Chari 2008; 2009; Turino 2006). After independence, four radio stations were established in Zimbabwe with a purpose of catering to the diverse ethnic groups (Mano, 2004). Radio three FM was one of the stations that used mainly English in their broadcasting and also played global music. Dee's taste in music has changed from when she was in Zimbabwe, where she listened to radio Three FM only. She now listens to all Zimbabwean music in Britain and is learning the bhasikoro dance. Dee provides further evidence of the importance of music to her sense of belonging and connection with Zimbabwe:

'But as for sungura music and stuff, and it's like, it's one of those things, because they sing songs you hear when you are young and then, vana Leonard Zhakata [musician in Zimbabwe] if you go to the village, proper village, and you go to the Growth point, that's the music they play. If you think of a childhood memory, it's associated with that music. if I think of my grandfather, when I think of Christmas and when i was pawned to the rural areas [sic] and I didn't want to go, that was the music they used to play, and I associate that with back home.'

Dee associates Sungura music with the rural areas and sense of 'home'. Sungura music is a type of music argued to have been started by a group in Zimbabwe called sungura boys and other scholars suggest that the music style was derived from East African music (Chitando,

Adogame, Bateye, 2012; Mhiripiri 2010). Dee's narration on the types of music she listens to demonstrates the dichotomy between class, place and identity. It is interesting to note that Dee listens not only to Shona' R'n'B songs, but also to 'Sungura' music. There is a significant connection between participants' perceptions and meanings of rural life and those that live in the rural areas, regarding what it is to be a Zimbabwean. These perceptions and imaginings are what some of the participants draw on to (re)construct their cultural identities. When I pressed her on why she was listening to the music and what it meant for her, Dee says:

'I think, there is nothing as good as <pause>, like, now back home, the young people who are singing and learning all sorts of genres in music, and those genres of music now I relate to. Now I notice that they sing R'n'B in Shona, and there is nothing as amazing as listening to a Zimbabwe love song in my language. So, I think, the genres have changed, and even dance hall is now in Shona, and so we are adapting to the genres, that are popular, and that's why I like it.'

Global influences on Zimbabwean music include African American genres of Rhythm and Blues (R 'n'B) and Afro-Caribbean dancehall music. This Zimbabwean 'urban grooves' music is argued by Tivenga and Manase (2019) to be urban contemporary music that is a fusion of the local and global influences. Through this music, young people express their experiences and grievances in the current political and social context in Zimbabwe (Chari, 2009; Kellerer, 2013; Manase, 2011; Viriri, Viriri and Chapwanya, 2011). I suggest that the fusion of language and global musical influences is an example of the cultural hybridity that is producing the new kind of music that participants like Dee can listen to. Additionally, the use of Zimbabwean languages in the songs helps to reinforce and express her cultural identity. Music, food and dance are also central to participants in Pasura's (2014) ethnographic research with Zimbabwean diaspora. He found that the Zimbabwean diaspora in Britain frequented pubs and social gatherings where Zimbabwean music, food and dance which gave them a sense of belonging. Furthermore, he also found that some participants

listened to Zimbabwean music that they did not like when they were in Zimbabwe and suggests that the music provides the diaspora with a mechanism to connect with their past lives.

Other ways through which participants connected with their past and reinforced their identities was through regular visits to Zimbabwe. In Chapter seven I examined the role of transnational connections on the women's family relationships and their children learning their cultural heritage. Some participants used their visits to Zimbabwe to strengthen their cultural identities and gendered cultural expectations. Samantha shared her experiences:

'I think that what has helped me, unlike Zimbabwean women who don't have the right paperwork... they find it difficult to go home and keep their culture alive, it really helped with me, every time I went home, I still had to do the cooking, on the fire and sweep the house.'

Samantha regularly visits her family in Zimbabwe and participates in gendered social practices that strengthen her cultural identity as a woman and wife. She further adds:

'I haven't lost my sense of identity; I still cook for my husband. I still do the traditions like, giving water on my knees, washing his hands before he has his food.'

Gender and diaspora researchers recognise the importance of transnational links for migrant families and how belonging is no longer about being bound to specific geographical places and spaces (Anthias, 2008; 2012; Vertovec, 2001). Visiting her family in Zimbabwe, submitting to the cultural expectations and speaking her language, helps to reinforce her cultural identity when she gets back to Britain. Samantha further shares her experiences with a Zimbabwean woman she met at her workplace:

'She has lost all sense of identity.... There hasn't been that link where she can cook sadza, where she can teach her children a word or two of Shona.'

Samantha gave the example of the woman as someone who had lost her identity, by way of contrast with how she conformed to her cultural expectations as a wife and woman.

Additionally, the extract shows the significance of language and food to one's cultural identity.

In summary, the findings show that the participants used food, music, and specific cultural values to strengthen their cultural identity. Most importantly, the findings show cultural values and beliefs are contested and renegotiated within social spaces that are also inhabited by others from different cultures.

Thesis conclusion

The study set out to explore, firstly, how gender intersects with other factors in black Zimbabwean women's reconstruction of their cultural identities and sense of belonging in Britain. Secondly, to examine how these cultural identities are established in spaces that socially position the women in multiply differentiated ways. These spaces define gender, culture and identity in specific ways. The focus was on Black Zimbabwean women who migrated to Britain from the late 1990s to the early part of the 21st century. I focused on this time period because of the mass exodus of Black Zimbabweans who left the country, due to economic decline, political violence and social disintegration, leading to the feminisation of Zimbabwean diaspora (Crush and Tevera, 2010). I focused on Zimbabwean women because of their exclusion from issues of policy. Aspinall and Mitton, (2011) notes that Southern African diaspora in the UK are not considered a need for policy focus due to their ability to speak English, being highly educated. Therefore, they are viewed as integrated into British society.

I employed African feminist standpoint theory to analyse the participants' gendered experiences and embodiment within a transnational context that defines gender and womanhood in contradictory ways. African feminism as a standpoint theory is employed because, firstly, it provides a lens through which we can deconstruct the gendered social constructions of transnational spaces that shape the participants' sense of belonging and social relationships. Lastly, western theorists ignore African women diaspora's transnationality. They mainly focus on the country of settlement instead of country of origin. Additionally, there were uncritical about conceptualisations of gender and

womanhood. The key findings are summarised below, and I will discuss them in turn further in the chapter, when I demonstrate how I answered the research questions.

1. Ascribed, gendered cultural identities that are based on gendered cultural expectations.

The women's accounts of their lives in Zimbabwe were narrated in essentialist ways and based on socio-cultural scripts that defined their lives and experiences. These narratives were based on stereotypical scripts of the typical African woman and the real Zimbabwean woman ideal. The production and reproduction of these gendered scripts was through social practises that included, gender socialisation within the family, pressure on women to marry when they were a certain age and punishment for non- conformity. These scripts and practices were then transposed to the diaspora and informed the women's experiences in private, religious, and online spaces.

2. Contested narrative of belonging and fragmentation of cultural identities

In the diaspora, the women's ascribed gendered cultural identities based on notions of gender roles are contested as the women encounter other beliefs on gender equality and egalitarianism. The fragmentation of their cultural identities results in the women questioning their social roles, individuality, and agency. The women respond to the contestations in multiple ways, employing different aspects of their cultures to redefine their identities. They redefine themselves based on the entanglements of gender, culture,

marital status and immigration status in their embodiment within the different spaces of the diaspora. For some participants, their culture was being oppressive and silences women. In contrast, the diaspora opened new possibilities and other socio- cultural scripts to reconceptualise their cultural identities in ways that aligned with their beliefs about themselves. For others, the perceived western beliefs and values were a threat to their cultural identities and to their own systems of beliefs and values. The women must also contend with new ascribed identities based on immigration status and race that locate them in contradictory ways. Issues of immigration status and citizenship are arbitrary as some participants' statuses shifted between different categories.

Some of the women experienced racism, and discrimination, leading to a yearning of 'home'. For some participants, home was associated with hope and rebuilding. For others, however, ideas about home, belonging and identity were contested based on prior negative experiences in Zimbabwe. The discontent with being labelled immigrant is also reflective of the Zimbabwean diaspora's preference for the term diaspora to describe themselves, instead of being called immigrants, asylum seekers and refugees. The Zimbabwean diaspora consider these labels dehumanising and alienating.

3. Reconfiguring the family dynamics

3.1. Gender relations: Changing social positionings

The family is argued to be the site where gendered cultural beliefs and traditions are contested. The findings indicate that part of the contestation of the participant's gendered cultural beliefs was in the family space; gender, marital status, culture intersect in the social

positioning of women in the domestic space. Better paying jobs and work patterns in the diaspora changed the women's social positionings within their gender relations. Longer working hours, challenged the participants' gendered roles in their relationships and the women's responses to the challenges were based on marital status (married or dating) and age. The younger women were more open to gender egalitarianism than the older women. Some of the participants challenged the established cultural gendered norms, yet others reinforced their traditional gendered roles and saw it as a marker of success. Not all the participants struggled with renegotiating gendered roles. Some participants indicated their relationships were equal and they shared domestic chores.

Not all the participants from the individual interviews were married, participants who were divorced had different experiences of relationships. Their experiences provided an insight into how dominant narratives of the real Zimbabwean woman also influenced men's expectations, as divorced women with children were discriminated against and viewed as damaged goods.

3.2 Parenting in- between spaces

Some participants had children living with them in Britain and others had left their children with family in Zimbabwe. For parents with children in Zimbabwe, they struggled with being separated from their children. For the women living with their children, they struggled with adjusting to the parenting styles in Britain due to what they deemed to be the involvement of the state in family practises. This led to some parents feeling disempowered. Participants framed their parenting practises based on the dichotomy

between African and western values. African values were deemed superior and their application of these values in raising children would result in positive outcomes for the children. The parents also transmitted these values to their children by ensuring that their children learnt their languages, ate food from Zimbabwe and for those who could travel, regularly visited family in Zimbabwe.

3.3. The role of extended family across transnational spaces

The analysis of the participants' extended family is premised on the understanding that social relations are complex and constantly renegotiated. Thus, the discussion on extended family across transnational spaces demonstrates these continuous negotiations and complexities. The participants still had strong links with family in Zimbabwe and for those who had settled status and financial means to do so, they visited their families regularly. These transnational attachments are utilised in many ways to maintain and redefine their cultural identities and as a tool to pass on their heritage to their children. A common theme among the participants was on the role of extended family in mediating family disputes.

Although the lack of extended family in mediating marriages and supporting families in the diaspora was an issue for some participants, I suggest that improved communication links allow family members in Zimbabwe to still exercise their influence on women and maintain gendered cultural practises in the diaspora. The findings show that certain traditions and customs that reinforce power hierarchies between women were also transported to Britain and renegotiated. Through the analysis of the mother-in-law and

daughter-in-law relationships, it enabled me to demonstrate power hierarchies that are not based on gender differences, but also seniority.

4. Cultural practices and markers of identity

For all participants' language, food, music and certain cultural practices and values associated with respect and humanity were central to reconstructions of cultural identities in the diaspora. However, previous experiences in Zimbabwe, and class, determined the aspects of cultural their resources the women employed to strengthen their cultural identities 'in-between' spaces. Participants from middle class families used their class and food to separate themselves from the Zimbabwean diaspora. Preservation of their languages was central to the participants' cultural identities and the women found various ways to preserve them and their cultural heritage. For single women, they preferred to date men from Zimbabwe, as they shared history and languages, such that the women could articulate the nuances of their cultures and languages and their partners would understand. For those with children, it was imperative that their children learnt their language as part of their heritage.

The main arguments of this thesis are:

- i. The women's ascribed, gendered cultural identities were fragmented in the diaspora. The fragmentation of their cultural identities, results in women reinterpreting their cultural beliefs and redefining their cultural identities.

ii. The women inhabit multiple transnational spaces that are defined by gender intersecting with culture, immigration status, race, and socio-economic status. The intersection of these categories of belonging redefined their cultural identities, social locations and created new belongings.

iii. The dichotomy between African and western values framed the women's narrations of their experiences and redefining of their cultural identities. The binary between African and western values underpinned gender conceptualisation, embodiment and belonging. This dichotomy determined the women's responses to the questioning and redefining of their ascribed gendered cultural identities. In the following section of the chapter, I will analyse the findings and how they answer the three research questions.

C.1. What are the factors that have contributed to the women's reconstruction of their cultural identities?

Three themes emerged from the women's narrations that contributed to the ascribed, gendered cultural identities and how their relationships were negotiated. Firstly, the women's colonial history significantly shaped their identities which racialised their bodies, reinforced gendered identities and separation of the domestic from the public spaces. Secondly, the women's previous experiences in the various private and public spaces in Zimbabwe shaped their identities. It is important to note that class, socio-economic status, determined these experiences in the private spaces. Lastly, ascription of racialised identities, and labels based on immigration status created boundaries of belonging amongst the women and also with society at large.

I will first examine the impact of colonial legacy on the women's cultural identities, following on, I analyse the intersection of gender, immigration status and race and its impact on the women's sense of belonging. The colonial encounter between the black Zimbabwean people and the British colonisers resulted in a creation of cultural scripts that essentialised women's identities and located them within the domestic space. Kanneh(1998) argues that colonisation, migration between African and Europe brought other knowledges and experiences that shaped African cultural identities, Bhabha (1994) goes further to add that cultural contact between the colonisers and the indigenous people in Africa resulted in the destabilisation of their identities, resulting in hybridised cultural identities.

The understanding of colonial factors that contributed to the construction of the women's cultural identities is important to the analysis of their cultural scripts that was based on a typical African woman and a real Zimbabwean woman ideal. The gendered cultural scripts are produced and reproduced within the family, religious and educational spaces, even in the diaspora. It is important to note that the typical African woman or real Zimbabwean woman does not exist, instead, African women are differentiated by *inter alia*, including class, ethnicity, language, race, socio-economic status and education. I argue that the gendered cultural scripts that defined the women are a result of colonial racist economic ideologies, Christian missionaries, racial segregation in Zimbabwe, that shaped what has been defined by Ndlovu – Gatsheni, (2007) as hybridised cultural identities. These cultural scripts emphasise women's reproduction and the family, thus assigning them to the domestic space. Furthermore, African Pentecostalism, nationalist discourses and global power dynamics have continued to reinforce these gendered identities that are limiting to the women.

Further to cultural and historical factors, political and social discourses on immigration and immigrants in Britain, have a significant impact on migrants' integration and sense of belonging (Anthias, 2013; 2016; Guratnam, 2014; Virdee and McGeever 2018). There is extensive research on race, identity, and integration in Britain (Gilroy, 2000, 2007, Hall, Block and Solomons, 2011). Black British feminist are particularly interested in the intersection of gender and race in women' social location and participation in public spaces (Guratnam, 2014; Mama, 2002; Mirza, 1997;2009; Tate, 2005). Black British feminists argue that gender intersects with race and class to socially locate women in multiple axis on inequalities and marginalisation. Although, race is a social construct, research shows that it is fundamental to British identities and notions of belonging. In this study, the women were ascribed racialized identities and labels based on their immigration status, thus, gender intersects with race, culture, socio-economic and immigration status in the women's social location. Racialised identities and labels related to their immigration status socially located the women in contradictory ways that are exclusionary. I suggest that anti-immigrant political and social discourses, experiences of institutional racism, and discrimination against migrants locate them as the other and contribute to their feelings of (un)belonging and a yearning to return 'home'.

Additional to racialised identities, the women also navigate social and public spaces based on their immigration status. The women migrated to England through different routes and were at various stages of the immigration process. On an institutional level, the participants faced racism and discrimination within the immigration system and workplaces. Therefore, exclusion and marginalisation of migrants is institutionalised in ways that create and strengthen feelings of (un)belonging of migrants in the country.

The marginalisation of the women and boundaries created, have policy implications in areas of integration and cohesion, where the UK government has highlighted the need for integration, in light of increased ethnic tensions, right wing views and terrorist attacks (Hickman, Mai, and Crowley, 2012). I will discuss issues of integration and cohesion later in the chapter.

C.2. How were their cultural identities experienced and their social relationships renegotiated in Britain? What socio-cultural resources did they employ to reconstruct their cultural identities?

I will address both the question on how cultural identities are experienced and the socio-cultural resources they employ to maintain their cultural identities. I address them together, as the findings show that the women employ some aspects of their cultures and other available socio-cultural and economic resources to either redefine or strengthen their cultural identities. Consequently, some participants felt alienated, marginalised and they were prone to construct cultural identities based on 'us' (Zimbabweans or Africans, depending on context) and 'them' (White British) and these social locations of belonging became confrontational. I argue that though the women have more opportunities for employment, Stringent laws on immigration, racialised identity labels that are exclusionary leave the women on the margins, as outsiders.

There is extensive research on African diaspora and identity within the Social Sciences. Earlier research focused on slavery, the displacement of African people and the identities that emerged from these experiences (Gilroy, 1993; Okpewho, Boyce Davis and

Mazrui, 2001). Current scholarship on African Diaspora has shifted to also include the new African diaspora; some of whom have voluntarily migrated to developed countries and still have contact with their families in their countries of origin (Falola, 2013; Okpewho and Nzegwu, 2009). Additionally, review of literature shows when people settle in another country, they bring with them their beliefs, values and traditions which become a lens through which they interpret their experiences in the country of settlement (Hall, 1992). In this study, the findings indicate that the women's cultural scripts that shaped their identities were challenged and their responses to the challenges diverged in the domestic, religious, online spaces and workplaces.

An exploration of how these multiple identities (both ascribed and inscribed) are made salient in different contexts, helps us recognise the social processes that enable the reconstructions of cultural identities within the 'third space.' (Bhabha (1994) notes that the third space is a result of the cultural contact and the socio- processes and systems that emerge and shape cultural identities. Hence, in the study, the third space is one that is created and defined by transnationality and cultural expectations and experiences in England that challenge their cultural scripts. Departing from Bhabha (1994) arguments on the third space and the identities that are reconstructed 'in-between' spaces, I suggest that the women's cultural identities are continually being defined and redefined. Therefore, drawing from Hall (1996), their identities are 'becoming', i.e. identities are connected to both the past and the future.

I also suggest that within the in-between spaces, there are tensions within the women and between the women. The women are caught between their desire to preserve their cultures; however, some aspects of their cultures constrain them and assign them to

gendered roles. Bhabha (1994;2015) further argues that cultures evolve and transform, as contact with other people increases, I suggest that the women's cultures, and identities are also transformed as they inhabit multiple transnational spaces that are defined by gender, culture, race and class., even if the women are unaware.

Within the in-between spaces, are also experiences of racism and exclusion. In response to these experiences, some of the participants constructed binary narratives between the African, superior values and the inferior British values. The women created boundaries of exclusion between themselves and 'British society' constituting 'imagined communities' of cultural identities. These imagined communities are maintained and ideologically reproduced by cultural practises like gender roles and preservation of their cultural beliefs and values.

The binary construction of the African and western values underpinned their accounts and their responses to the challenges to their cultural identities. For the participants who felt that their cultural identities were constricting, they interpret their culture in new ways to redefine their identities. African feminists argue that western debates and discourses on the African women's bodies and sexualities are shaped by an imperialist discourse (Nnaemeka, 2005; Njambi, 2004; De Cassanova, and Afshar, 2016). Naidu (2010) further adds that these imperial discourses have constructed African women's identities in dichotomised ways between African/traditional and western/modern world view. This binary is employed differently by the participants depending on the context. An analysis of the African woman narrative and binary between the traditional/ African values and the western values shows a juxtaposition between the two.

Another main finding in this study was how different aspect of the women's cultural identities are made salient in various transnational spaces. In some spaces, marital status is salient, for example, within the religious spaces, women who were divorced felt vilified and stigmatised in these spaces. In contrast, race and immigration status were salient within public spaces of the workplace, statutory institutions and within their neighbourhood, where some participants experienced racism and discrimination. The women's narrations also showed the tensions between issues of individual agency and the pressure to conform to cultural expectations. In the diaspora, the women have space to redefine their cultural identities that are not necessarily tied to gendered roles, they employ different aspects of their cultural beliefs and values to redefine their cultural identities. However, they are also criticised for non-conformity to gendered cultural expectations. I suggest that the backlash some participants faced from other women on non-conformity to ascribed cultural gendered roles is based on the importance that is placed on families and the secondary role of work in sustaining the family.

To demonstrate the struggle between the individual and the collective, Afshar (2012) utilises Muslim women in Britain's lives to argue that Muslim women in Britain have adopted the hijab as a public show of their faith and empowerment as the rise in Islamophobia and the tensions between faith and nationalism. The women utilise their faith to construct distinct identities, allowing them to navigate the challenges of living in contested spaces. I suggest that similar to Afshar's (2012) findings, the women in this study developed strategies to navigate the different transnational spaces. Some of the ways that the participants navigated contested spaces was through the use of their bodies to resist cultural and religious ascriptions, for example, Tinotenda's domestic worker who left

Zimbabwe and her church and began to dress in ways that were deemed unacceptable by her religion, leading to her excommunication. Furthermore, some participants used their bodies to affirm their Africanness through their hair and positive body images that contrasted the Eurocentric modes of body images. I further argue that political and social discourses in Britain that reinforce power inequalities between the majority and minorities work to constrain the women to the very social locations they may be resisting.

What was interesting in the study is the women's participation in Facebook and What App women's groups. Online groups gave the women opportunities to engage with other Zimbabwe diaspora in other countries. Additionally, they provided participants the social distance and simultaneously, maintaining their connections with an imagined Zimbabwean community.

C.3. Contribution to knowledge

I will begin with the strengths of the study before discussing contribution to knowledge. The strengths of the study include, first, the use of transtemporal approach which was useful in capturing the transnational dynamics of belonging and identity processes and the centrality of gender. Secondly, my ability to engage with the women based on my social location as a Zimbabwean – British woman gives me insights and understanding of cultural nuances that other researchers, from other ethnicities may miss. Lastly, by focusing on the phenomenological aspects of gender, gender relations and workplace experiences, I was able to draw attention to the complex socio-cultural processes and practises that shape the women's lives within the in-between spaces.

The conceptualisation of gender is central to Gender and Migration studies, (April 2016; Castle et al, 2014; Lutz, 2010; Kofman, 2013). Research and theorising on gender has transformed from biological sex roles to an interactionist perspective on gender (Collins 2009; April 2016). Collins (2009) notes that intersectionality enables researchers to study gender and power at both individual and institutional levels. The study contributes to Gender and migration scholarship and gender conceptualisation by demonstrating the everyday practises, mechanisms that migrant women employ and enact in redefining their gender, gender relations and cultural identities. These mechanisms are examples of that which constitute the theoretical debates and concepts in gender and migration research. It is important not only to focus on the intersectionality of gender and other categories in identity reconstruction, but also on cultural hybridity and the spaces within which these social processes of gender and belonging occur.

This study also contributes to knowledge African diaspora research within post-colonial studies that argues on the impact of colonial legacy on African cultural identities. Not only does this study demonstrate how the women's cultural identities were shaped by their history, it also shows how certain gendered narratives continue to affect African women, even in the diaspora today. Rodriguez et al. (2015) note that African feminism needed to break the geographic boundaries and recognise the global movement of women and the transnational links African women have. They further argue that there are still a few projects that bring together African scholarly work and its diasporic connections. Thus, the study engages and advances this feminist scholarship.

C.4. Limitations of the study

I discussed in chapter five, how my positionality within the research had an impact on the research process. Cultural factors shaped the interviews with older participants. Due to the age difference and their seniority, I felt limited to explore certain aspects of the women's lives, out of respect for them. Additionally, some of the participants articulated themselves in Shona to emphasis their points and narrate their experiences. In translating the narrations from Shona to English, certain meanings were diluted.

The research questions were too broad, the study would have benefited from a specific focus on an aspect of the women's lives allowing for more in-depth study of the phenomenon, for example use of social media spaces. Another limitation was the recruitment of participants from across the country and the differences in local demographics which may impact on the women's ability to integrate or develop social relations with other Zimbabweans. For example, a participant living in Sheffield, shared about the lack of Zimbabwean community in her area and she joined online groups instead. Another participant in Birmingham was part of a Zimbabwean women's religious group, thus the women's experiences, as Zimbabweans will differ.

Although, I used semi-structured interviews, on reflection, if I had to do it again, I would use ethnography and/or ethnographic interviews, which would yield in depth accounts of the women's lives and a better understanding of the contexts of their experiences.

C.5. Future research

Future research may focus on specific themes that emerged from the study, specifically, the use of online women's groups. Review of literature indicate that migrants use technological tools to connect with family and friends. There is potential to take explore the sue of social media platforms, by migrant women, especially ones that are specifically for the female migrants from that particular country. The questions can explore how the ways through socio-cultural processes are constructed and cultural identities redefined within the women's groups.

References

- Abdi, C.M. (2014) 'Threatened Identities and Gendered Opportunities: Somali Migration to America'. *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 39 (2): 459–83.
- Acholonu, C.O. (1995) *Motherism: The Afrocentric Alternative to Feminism*. Afa publications.
- Acker, J. (2006) *Class Questions: Feminist Answers*. Toronto: Rowman and Littlefield publishers.
- Acker, J. Barry, K. and Esseveld, J. (1983) 'Objectivity and Truth: Problems in Doing Feminist Research'. In *Feminism and Social Change: Bridging theory and practise*. Edited by Gottfried, H. Chicago: University of Illinois Press.
- Adams, W.C. (2015) 'Conducting Semi-Structured Interviews'. In *Handbook of Practical Program Evaluation*, edited by Newcomer, K.E., Hatry, H. P. and Wholey, J.S. 492–505. Hoboken, NJ, USA: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.
- Adogame, A. U., Roswith I. H. Gerloff, and Hock, K. Edited. (2008) *Christianity in Africa and the African Diaspora: The Appropriation of a Scattered Heritage*. Continuum Religious Studies. London; New York: Continuum.
- Adogame, A. U., and Spickard, J.V. Edited. (2010) *Religion Crossing Boundaries: Transnational Religious and Social Dynamics in Africa and the New African Diaspora*. Religion and the Social Order, v. 18. Leiden, The Netherlands; Boston.
- Afshar, H. (1987) *Women, State, and Ideology: Studies from Africa and Asia*. Suny Press.
- (2012). *Women and Fluid Identities: Strategic and Practical Pathways Selected by Women*. (ed). Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire; New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Akin- Aina, S. (2011) 'Beyond an Epistemology of Bread, Butter, Culture and Power Mapping

- the African Feminist Movement.' *Nokoko: Institute of African Studies, Carleton University* (2).
- Akbulut, Y., Sahin, Y.L. and Eristi, B. (2010) Cyberbullying Victimization among Turkish Online Social Utility Members. *Journal of Educational Technology & Society*, 13(4), 192-201.
- Akyeampong, E., and Fofack, H. (2013) *The Contribution of African Women to Economic Growth and Development in Post-Colonial Africa: Historical Perspectives and Policy Implications*. Policy Research Working Papers. The World Bank.
- Akujobi, R. (2011) 'Motherhood in African Literature and Culture.' *Comparative Literature and Culture* 13 (1).
- Alcoff, L. and Potter, E. (1993) *Feminist Epistemologies*. London: Routledge.
- Allen, K. R., and Jaramillo-Sierra. A.L. (2015) 'Feminist Theory and Research on Family Relationships: Pluralism and Complexity'. *Sex Roles* 73 (3–4): 93–99.
- Allendorf, K. (2017) 'Like Her Own: Ideals and Experiences of the Mother-In-Law/Daughter-In-Law Relationship'. *Journal of Family Issues* 38 (15): 2102–27.
- Allman, J.M. Geiger, S. and Musisi, N. eds. (2002). *Women in African Colonial Histories*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Alofonso, C.W. Kokot, W. and Tololyan. K. (2004) *Diasporic, Identity and Religion: New Directions in Theory and Reserch*.
- Amadiume, I. (1997) *Reinventing Africa: Matriarchy, Religion, and Culture*. New York: Zed publishers.
- Amit, V. and Knowles, C. eds. (1996) *Re-Situating Identities: The Politics of Race, Ethnicity, and Culture*. Peterborough, Ont., Canada; Orchard Park, N.Y: Broadview Press.
- Amri, L., Ramola R. (2014) *Gender and Citizenship in the Global Age*. Dakar, Senegal Codesria

- (Conseil pour le Developpement de la Recherche Economique et Sociale en Afrique).
- Anleu, S. (2006) 'Gendered Bodies: Between Conformity and Autonomy'. In *Handbook of Gender and Women's Studies*, 357–75. London, United Kingdom: Sage Publications.
- Annan - Yao, E. (2000) 'African gender research in the new millennium: Gender relations and perspectives, directions and challenges: Analysis of Gender Relations in the Family, Formal Education and Health.' *CODESRIA: African Gender in the New Millennium*.
- Anthias, F. A. (2001) 'New Hybridities, Old Concepts: The Limits of "Culture"'. *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 24 (4): 619–41.
- (2002). 'Where Do I Belong? Narrating Collective Identity and Translocational Positionality'. *Ethnicities* 2, no. 4. 491–514.
- (2007) 'Ethnic ties: Social capital and the question of mobilizability.' *The Sociological Review*, 55 (4), 788–805.
- (2009) 'Translocational Belonging, Identity and Generation: Questions and Problems in Migration and Ethnic Studies' 4 (1): 10.
- (2012) 'Transnational Mobilities, Migration Research and Intersectionality'. *Nordic Journal of Migration Research* 2 (2).
- (2016) 'Interconnecting Boundaries of Identity and Belonging and Hierarchy-Making within Transnational Mobility Studies: Framing Inequalities'. *Current Sociology* 64 (2): 172–190.
- Arnfred, S. (2004) *African Gender Scholarship: Concepts, Methodologies, and Paradigms*. Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa.
- (2015) 'Female Sexuality as Capacity and Power? Reconceptualizing Sexualities in Africa'. *African Studies Review; Piscataway* 58 (3): 149–70.
- Arthur, J.A (2009) *African Women Immigrants in the United States: Crossing Transnational*

Borders. Springer.

——— (2010) *African Diaspora Identities: Negotiating Culture in Transnational Migration*.

Lanham: Lexington Books.

Arthur, John A., Takougang, J. and Owusu, T. (2012) *Africans in Global Migration: Searching for Promised Lands*. Lanham, MD, United States: Lexington Books.

Asamoah-Gyadu, J.K. (2013) *Contemporary Pentecostal Christianity: Interpretations from an African Context*. Oxford: Regnum Books.

Ashcroft, R., and Bevir, M. (2016) 'Pluralism, National Identity and Citizenship: Britain after Brexit.' *The political Quarterly*, 87 (3), 355-359.

Aspinall, P.J. and Chinouya, J. (2016) *The African Diaspora Population in Britain: Migrant Identities and Experiences*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Atanga, L. L., Ellece, S.E., Litosseliti, L., Sunderland, J. Edited. (2013) *Gender and Language in Sub-Saharan Africa: Tradition, struggle and change*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins publishing.

Atanga, L. L., and Djimli, A. (2011) Homosexuality, media communication and state action in Cameroon. *Sexuality in Africa – Magazine and Monographs* 7(2): 5–9.

Baak, M. (2016) *Negotiating Belongings Stories of Forced Migration of Dinka Women from South Sudan*. Rotterdam: Sense Publishers.

Badejo, D. L. (1998) 'African Feminism: Mythical and Social Power of Women of African Descent'. *Research in African Literatures*. 29, No. 2. 94-111.

Bagnol, B., and Mariano, E. (2008) 'Vaginal Practises: Eroticism and Implications for Women's Health and Condom Use in Mozambique.' *Culture, Health and Sexuality*, 10 (6), 573-585.

Bakhurst, D., and Sydnovich, C. eds. (1995) *The Social Self*. Inquiries in Social Construction.

London: Sage publications.

- Barnes, T. A. (1992) 'The Fight for Control of African Women's Mobility in Colonial Zimbabwe, 1900-1939'. *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 17 (3): 586–608.
- Bastia, T. (2014) 'Intersectionality, Migration and Development'. *Progress in Development Studies* 14 (3): 237–48.
- Batisai, K. (2016) 'Transnational Labour Migration, Intimacy and Relationships: How Zimbabwean Women Navigate the Diaspora'. *Diaspora Studies* 9 (2): 165–78.
- Baumann, G. (1996) *Contesting Culture: Discourses of Identity in Multi-Ethnic London*. Baumeister: Oxford university press.
- Benhabib, S. (2002) *The Claims of Culture: Equality and Diversity in the Global Era*. Oxfordshire: Princeton University Press.
- Bennett, J. and Pereira, C. eds. (2013) *Jacketed Women: Qualitative Research Methodologies on Sexualities and Gender in Africa*. Tokyo; New York: United Nations University Press.
- Beoku-Betts, J. A., and Njambi, W.N. (2005) 'African Feminist Scholars in Women's Studies: Negotiating Spaces of Dislocation and Transformation in the Study of Women'. *Meridians: Feminism, Race, Transnationalism* 6 (1): 113–32.
- Beoku-Betts, J., Adomako Ampofo, A., and Osirim.M. (2008) 'Researching African Women and Gender Studies: New Social Science Perspectives'. *African and Asian Studies* 7 (4): 327–41.
- Berry, J.W. (1997) 'Immigration, Acculturation, and Adaptation.' *Applied Psychology: An International Review*, 46 (1). 5-68.
- Bhabha, H. K. (2004) *The Location of Culture*. Routledge Classics. London: Routledge.
- Bhambra, G. K. (2014) 'Postcolonial and Decolonial Dialogues'. *Postcolonial Studies* 17 (2):

115–21.

Bhatia, S. and Ram, A. (2009) 'Rethinking Acculturation in Relation to Diasporic Cultures and Post-Colonial Identities'. *Human Development*.

Bhatia, S. (2007) 'Opening up Cultural Psychology: Analysing Race, Caste, and Migrant Identities'. *Human Development* 50 (6): 320–27.

Bhavnani, K.K., and Phoenix, A. (1994) 'Shifting identities shifting racisms.' *Feminism and Psychology* 4 (1), 5-18.

Bhopal, K. (2001) 'Researching South Asian Women: Issues of Sameness and Difference in the Research Process'. *Journal of Gender Studies* 10 (3): 279–86.

——— (2008) 'Gender, identity and experience: Researching marginalised groups.' *Women's Studies International Forum*, 33 (3), 188-195.

Bilge, S. (2010) 'Beyond Subordination vs. Resistance: An Intersectional Approach to the Agency of Veiled Muslim Women'. *Journal of Intercultural Studies* 31 (1): 9–28.

Biri, K. (2015) *African Pentecostalism, the Bible, and Cultural Resilience: The Case of Zimbabwe Assemblies of God Africa*. Bamberg: University of Bamberg Press.

Bloch, A. (2006) 'Emigration from Zimbabwe: Migrant Perspectives'. *Social Policy & Administration* 40 (1): 67–87.

Block, D. and Corona. V. (2014) 'Exploring Class-Based Intersectionality'. *Language, Culture and Curriculum* 27 (1): 27–42.

Boccagni, P. 2017 *Migration and the Search for Home Mapping Domestic Space in Migrants' Everyday Lives*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Bonifacio, G.L. Edited. (2012) *Feminism and Migration, Cross-Cultural Engagement*. London, NY: Springer publishers.

Bonsu, S.K. 2009 Colonial images in global times: consumer interpretations of Africa and

- Africans in advertising. *Consumption, Markets and Culture*, 12:1, 1-25.
- Bouilly, E. Rillon, O. and Cross, H. (2016) 'African Women's Struggles in a Gender Perspective'. *Review of African Political Economy* 43 (149): 338–49.
- Bourdillon, M.F.C. (1987) *The Shona Peoples: An Ethnography of the Contemporary Shona, with Special Reference to Their Religion*. Harare: Mambo Press.
- Bourdillon, M., Pfigu, T., and Chinodya, J. (2006) *Child Domestic Workers in Zimbabwe*. Harare, Zimbabwe: Weaver Press.
- Bottero, W. (2004) 'Class Identities and the Identity of Class'. *Sociology* 38 (5): 985–1003.
- Bradby, H. (2002) 'Translating Culture and Language: A research Note on Multilingual Settings'. *Sociology of Health & Illness*, 24 (6), 842–855.
- Brah, A. (1996) *Cartographies of Diaspora Contesting Identities*. London: Routledge publishers.
- Bronner, S.E. 2nd Edition. (2011) *Critical Theory: A Very Short Introduction*. NY: Oxford University Press.
- Brubaker, R. (2005) 'The "Diaspora" Diaspora'. *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 28 (1): 1–19.
- Brubaker, R. and Cooper, F. (2000) 'Beyond "Identity"'. *Theory and Society* 29, no: 1–47.
- Bryman, A. (2016) *Social Research Methods*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Bucholtz, M. and Hall, K. (2005) 'Identity and Interaction: A Sociocultural Linguistic Approach'. *Discourse Studies*, 7(4–5), pp. 585–614.
- Burnley, I. H. (2016) 'Developments and Complementarities in International Migration Paradigms'. *Journal of International Migration and Integration* 17 (1): 77–94.
- Caarls, K., Haagsman, K., Kraus, E. K. and Mazzucato, V. (2018) 'African Transnational Families: Cross-Country and Gendered Comparisons: African Transnational Families'. *Population, Space and Place* 24 (7).

- Callero, P.L. (2003) 'The Sociology of the Self.' *Annual Review of Sociology*, 29 (1), 115–33.
- Campt, T. and Thomas. D.A. (2008) 'Gendering Diaspora: Transnational Feminism, Diaspora and Its Hegemonies'. *Feminist Review* 90 (1): 1–8.
- Carastathis, A. (2014) 'The Concept of Intersectionality in Feminist Theory: The Concept of Intersectionality in Feminist Theory'. *Philosophy Compass* 9 (5): 304–14.
- Carbado, D. W., Crenshaw, K., Mays, V.M. and Tomlinson, B. (2013) 'Intersectionality'. *Du Bois Review: Social Science Research on Race* 10 (02): 303–12.
- Castles, S., and Davidson, A. (2000) *Citizenship and Migration: Globalization and the Politics of Belonging*. Psychology Press.
- Castles, S. De Haas, H and Miller, M.J. (2014) *The Age of Migration: International Population Movements in the Modern World*. 5. ed. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Castelli, E.A., with assistance from Rodman, R. (2001) *Women, Gender, Religion: A Reader*. New York: Palgrave publications.
- Charsley, K. Storer-Church, B., Benson, M. and Van Hear, N. (2012) 'Marriage-Related Migration to the UK'. *International Migration Review* 46 (4): 861–90.
- Cheung, S. Y., and Phillimore, J. (2014) Refugees, Social Capital, and Labour Market Integration in the UK. *Sociology*, 48(3), 518–536.
- Chhachhi, A. Pittin, R.I. (1996) *Confronting State, Capital and Patriarchy: Women Organizing in the Process of Industrialization*. Institute of Social Studies (Netherlands).
- Chikanda, A. and Crush, J. (2018). 'Global Zimbabweans: Diaspora Engagement and Disengagement'. *Journal of International Migration and Integration*.
- Chikowero, M. (2015) *African Music, Power, and Being in Colonial Zimbabwe*. Indiana University Press.
- Chilangwa – Farmer, D. (2013) *Black Women in Management Paid Work and Family*

- Formations. Basingstoke: Palgrave and Macmillan publications.*
- Chilisa, B, and Ntseane, G. (2010) Resisting Dominant Discourses: Implications of Indigenous, African Feminist Theory and Methods for Gender and Education Research.' *Gender and Education* 22 (6): 617–32.
- Chireshe, E. and Chireshe.R. (2010) 'Lobola: The Perceptions of Great Zimbabwe University Students'. *Journal of Pan African Studies* 3 (9): 211–21.
- Chitando, E. (2002) 'Singing Culture: A Study of Gospel Music in Zimbabwe.' *Report for Nordiska Afrikainstitutet*, 121.
- Chitando, E. Adogame, A., and Bayete, B. (2012) *African Traditions in the Study of Religion in Africa: Emerging Trends, Indigenous Spirituality and the Interface with Other World Religions*. London: Routledge publishing.
- Chow, E.N., Segal, T.M., and Tan, L. (2011) *Analyzing Gender, Intersectionality, and Multiple Inequalities: Global-transnational and Local Contexts*. Bingley: Emerald Group Publishing.
- Chiwome, E. (1994) 'The Role of the Church in the Shift of the Marriage and the Family Institutions from Tradition to Modernity: The Case of Zimbabwe'. *African Family and Marriage under Stress*. Pretoria: Centre for Development Analysis.
- Christou, A. (2006) *Narratives of Place, Culture and Identity: Second-Generation Greek Americans Return 'Home'*. IMISCOE Dissertations. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press.
- Chuang, S. and. Tamis- Le Monda, C. S. Edited. (2013) *Gender Roles in Immigrant Families*. Advances in Immigrant Family Research. New York: Springer publishers.
- Cimino, A. Leijenhorst. C. Edited. (2018) *Phenomenology and Experience: New Perspectives*. Boston: Brill publishers.

- Clarke, S. (2011). *Culture and Identity: The Sage Handbook of Cultural Analysis*. London: Sage publications.
- Clark, K., and Drinkwater, S. (2002) 'Enclaves, Neighbourhood Effects and Employment Outcomes: Ethnic Minorities in England and Wales.' *Journal of Population Economics*, 15, 5–29.
- Cliffe, L. Alexander, J., Cousins, B. and Gaidzanwa, R. (2011) 'An Overview of Fast Track Land Reform in Zimbabwe: Editorial Introduction'. *Journal of Peasant Studies* 38 (5): 907–38.
- Coate, S.A. K. and Wa Goro W. Edited. (2000) *Global Feminist Politics: Identities in a Changing World*. London: Routledge.
- Cobbah, J.A.M. (1987) 'African Values and the Human Rights Debate: An African Perspective.' *Human Rights Quarterly*, 9 (3), 309-331.
- Cohen, R. 2nd Edition. (2008) *Global Diasporas: An Introduction*. London: Routledge.
- Collins, P.H. (1989) 'The Social Construction of Black Feminist Thought'. *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 14 (4): 745–73.
- . (1997) 'Comment on Hekman's "Truth and Method: Feminist Standpoint Theory Revisited": Where's the Power?' *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 22 (2):
- (2000) Second edition. *The Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness, and the politics and empowerment*. London: Routledge publishers.
- (2003) *Toward an Afrocentric Feminist Epistemology*. In. Lincoln, Y.S. and Denzin, N.K. Edited. *Turning Points in Qualitative Research: Tying Knots in a Handkerchief*. Oxford: Altamira Press.
- Collins, P.H., and Solomons, J. Edited. (2010) *The Sage Handbook of Race and Ethnic Studies*. London: Sage publications.

- Collins, P.H., and Bilge, S. (2016) *Intersectionality*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Cook, J., and Fonow, M. (1985) Knowledge and Women's Interests: Issues of Epistemology and Methodology in Feminist Sociological Research. *Sociological Inquiry*. 56. 2 - 29.
- Corlett, S., and Mavin, S. (2014) 'Intersectionality and identity: shared tenets and future research agendas for gender and identity studies', *Gender in Management: An International Journal*, 29 (5), 258-276
- Cornwall, A. (2005) *Readings in Gender in Africa*. Indianapolis: Indiana University Press.
- Cox, M. J., and Paley, B. (1997). 'Families as systems. *Annual Review of Psychology* 48 (1): 243–
- Crasnow, S. (2009). 'Is Standpoint Theory a Resource for Feminist Epistemology? An Introduction'. *Hypatia*, 24 (4), 189-192.
- Creese, G. (2010) 'Erasing English Language Competency: African Migrants in Vancouver, Canada'. *Journal of International Migration and Integration* 11 (3): 295–313.
- Croucher, S.M. (2011) Social Networking and Cultural Adaptation: A Theoretical Model.' *Journal of International and Intercultural Communication*. 4, (4), 259-264.
- Crush, J. S. and Tevera D. S. (2010) *Zimbabwe's Exodus: Crisis, Migration, Survival*. International Development Research Centre (Canada), and Southern African Migration Project. Cape Town [South Africa]; Ottawa [Ont: Southern African Migration Project; International Development Research Centre.
- Dangarembga, T. (1989) *Nervous Conditions*. Zimbabwe Publishing House
- Davis, K. (1997). *Embodied Practices: Feminist Perspectives on the Body*. Sage publishers.
- Davis, K., Evans, M. and Lorber, J. (2006) 'Introduction'. In *Handbook of Gender and Women's Studies*, London, United Kingdom: SAGE Publications Ltd.
- Davis, K. Ghorashi, H. and Smets. P. (2018) *Contested Belonging: Spaces, Practices, Biographies*. Bingley: Emerald Group Publishing.

- Davies, R. (2007) 'Reconceptualising the Migration – Development Nexus: Diasporas, Globalisation and the Politics of Exclusion'. *Third World Quarterly* 28 (1): 59–76.
- Decimo, F. and Gribaldo, A. (2017). *Boundaries within: Nation, Kinship and Identity among Migrants and Minorities*.
- Dekker, R., and Engbersen, G. (2014) 'How social media transform migrant networks and facilitate migration.' *Global Networks: The Journal of Transnational Affairs*, 14 (4), 401-418.
- Delanty, G., Wodak, R. and Jones, P. (2008). *Identity, Belonging and Migration*. Oxford University Press.
- Denzin, N.K., and Lincoln, Y.S. 2nd Edition. (2000) *Handbook of Qualitative Research*. Sage, Thousand Oaks.
- Descombe, M. (2002) 2nd Edition. *Ground Rules for Social Research: Guidelines for good practise*. Maidenhead: Open University Press.
- Donato, K.M. and Gabaccia, D. (2016) 'The Global Feminization of Migration: Past, Present, and Future'. *Online Journal of the Migration Policy Institute*.
- Dosekun, S. (2016) 'The politics of fashion and beauty in Africa.' *Feminist Africa* (21), 1-6.
- Dustin, M. (2010) 'Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting in the UK: Challenging the Inconsistencies', *European Journal of Women's Studies*, 17(1), pp. 7–23.
- Eatough, V. and Smith, J.A. (2006) I feel like a scrambled egg in my head: An idiographic case study of meaning making and anger using interpretative phenomenological analysis. *Psychology and Psychotherapy: Theory, Research and Practice*, 79, 115–135.
- Edwards, A. C.R., and Temple, B. (2007) Contesting Cultural Communities: Language, Ethnicity, and Citizenship in Britain. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 33 (5), 783-800.

- Eleni A. (2010) 'Identity Positioning and Self – Other Relations.' *Paper on Social Representations*. Online Journal Vol (19). Pages 14.1 – 14.3.
- Entwistle, J. (2015). *The Fashioned Body: Fashion, Dress and Social Theory*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Erle, U. (2013) 'Kurdish migrant mothers in London enacting citizenship'. *Citizenship Studies*, 17:8, 970-984.
- Acker, J. Barry, K., Esseveld, J. (1996) 'Objectivity and truth: Problems in doing feminist research.' In Gottfried, H. Edited. *Feminism and Social Change: Bridging Theory and Practise*. Chicago: University of Illinois Press.
- Essof, S. (2013) *SheMurenga: The Zimbabwe Women's Movement, 1995-2000*. Weaver Press, Harare: Avondale. Avondale: Harare: Weaver press.
- Etim, J. (2016) Edited. *Introduction to Gender Studies in Eastern and Southern Africa: A Reader*. Rotterdam: Sense publishers.
- Faircloth, C. Hoffman, D.M. and Layne, L.L. (2013) *Parenting in Global Perspective: Negotiating Ideologies of Kinship, Self and Politics*. Routledge.
- Faist, T. and Verkuyten, M. (2004) *Transnational Social Spaces: Agents, Networks and Institutions*. Florence, United Kingdom: Routledge.
- Falola, T, and Porter Sanchez, D. Edited. (2014) *African Culture and Global Politics: Language, Philosophies, and Expressive Culture in Africa and the Diaspora*. Routledge African Studies 15. New York: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group.
- Falola, T, and Yacob-Haliso, O. Edited. (2017) *Gendering Knowledge in Africa and the African Diaspora: Contesting History and Power*. Global Africa 5. London: New York, NY: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group.
- Farr, J, Blenkiron, L., Harris, R. and. Smith, J.A. (2018) "'It's My Language, My Culture, and

- It's Personal!" Migrant Mothers' Experience of Language Use and Identity Change in Their Relationship with Their Children: An Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis'. *Journal of Family Issues* 39 (11): 3029–54.
- Farris, D. N., Davis, M.A. and Lane, D. and Compton, R. (2014) *Illuminating How Identities, Stereotypes and Inequalities Matter through Gender Studies*. London: Springer Publishers.
- Fazakarley, J. (2017) *Muslim Communities in England 1962-90: Multiculturalism and Political Identity*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Fidan, A. and. Bui, H.N. (2016) 'Intimate Partner Violence Against Women in Zimbabwe'. *Violence Against Women* 22 (9): 1075–96.
- Finlay, L., and Gough, B. (2003) *Reflexivity: A Practical guide for Social Researchers in Health and Social Sciences*. Oxford: Blackwell publishers.
- Fischer, C. and Dolezal, L. (2018) 'Contested Terrains: New Feminist Perspectives on Embodiment'. In *New Feminist Perspectives on Embodiment*, edited by Clara Fischer and Luna Dolezal, 1–13. Cham: Springer International Publishing.
- Flahaux, M.L. and De Haas, H. (2016) 'African Migration: Trends, Patterns, Drivers'. *Comparative Migration Studies* 4 (1).
- Flick, U. (2009) *An Introduction to Qualitative Research*. 4th ed. Los Angeles: Sage publications.
- Foucault, M. Edited. (1980) *Language, Counter-memory, Practice: Selected Essays and Interviews*. New York: Cornell University Press.
- Fortunati, L., Pertierra, R. and Vincent, J. (2013) *Migration, Diaspora, and Information Technology in Global Societies*. NY: Routledge publishers.
- Franks, M. (2002) 'Feminisms and Cross- Ideological Feminist Social Research: Standpoint,

- Situatedness and Positionality- Developing Cross Ideological Research.’ *Journal of International Women’s Studies* 3 (2): 38–50.
- Freeman, M. A. (1994) ‘Women, Law, and Land at the Local Level: Claiming Women’s Human Rights in Domestic Legal Systems’. *Human Rights Quarterly* 16, no. 3. 559.
- Gajjala, R., Zhang, Y., and Dako-Gyeke, P. (2010) ‘Lexicons of Women's Empowerment Online.’ *Feminist Media Studies* 10 (1), 69-86.
- Gakanje, F. (2019) *A Life Robbed: Reflections on My Asylum Experience in The United Kingdom*. Avon: Brown Dog Books.
- Galletta, A. and Cross, W.E. (2013) *Mastering the Semi-Structured Interview and Beyond: From Research Design to Analysis and Publication*. NY: New York University Press.
- Garrett, P. M. (2006) ‘Protecting Children in a Globalized World: ‘Race’ and ‘Place’ in the Laming Report on the Death of Victoria Climbié’, *Journal of Social Work*, 6(3), pp. 315–336.
- Gerloff, R. (2011) ‘Migration, Diaspora, and Identity’. *The Encyclopaedia of Christian Civilization*.
- Gilroy, P. (1987) *There Ain't No Black in the Union Jack*. Oxfordshire: Unwin Hyman Ltd.
- Goduka, I. (2000) *African/Indigenous Philosophies: Legitimizing Spirituality-Centred Wisdoms within the Academy*. In Higgs, P., Vakalisa, N.C.G., Mda, T.V., and Assie – Lumumba, L.T. Edited. *African Voices in Education*. Cape Town: Juta.
- Gómez-Estern, B.M. and De la Mata Benítez, M.L. (2013) ‘Narratives of Migration: Emotions and the Interweaving of Personal and Cultural Identity through Narrative’. *Culture & Psychology* 19 (3): 348–68.
- Gonye, J. (2013) ‘Mobilizing Dance/Traumatizing Dance: “Kongonya” and the Politics of Zimbabwe’. *Dance Research Journal* 45 (1): 64–79.

- Goredema, R. (2010) 'African Feminism: The African Woman's Struggle for Identity'. *African Yearbook of Rhetoric*, 1 (1): 33–41.
- Gorelick, S. (1994) 'Contradictions of Feminist Methodology.' In Gottfried, H. Edited. *Feminism and Social Change: bridging Theory and Practise*. Illinois: University of Illinois Press.
- Grusec, J. E., and Hastings, P.D. Edited. (2014) *Handbook of Socialization, Second Edition: Theory and Research*. London: Guilford Publications.
- Guedes Bailey, O. (2012) Migrant African women: tales of agency and belonging, *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 35:5, 850-867.
- Gunaratnam, Y. (2003) *Researching Race and Ethnicity; Methods Knowledge and Power*. London: Sage publications.
- Gupta, A. and Ferguson, J. (1992) 'Beyond "Culture": Space, Identity, and the Politics of Difference:' *Cultural Anthropology* 7 (1): 6–23.
- Gutiérrez-Rodríguez, E. (1998) *Migration, Domestic Work and Affect: A Decolonial Approach on Value and the Feminization of Labour*. London: Routledge.
- Hall, J., Battanni, M. and Neitz, M.J. (2003) *Sociology on Culture*. London: Routledge publishers.
- Hall, S. (1997a) The Local and the Global: Globalisation and Ethnicity. In McClintock, A., Mufti, A. and Shohat, E. *Dangerous Liaisons: Gender, Nation and Post-Colonial Perspectives*. London: University of Minnesota press.
- Hall, S. Edited. (1997b) *Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices*. London: Sage publishers.
- Hall, S., and Du Gay P. Edited. (1996) *Questions of Cultural Identity*. London; Thousand Oaks press.

- Haraway, D. (1991) 'Situated Knowledges,' In *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women*, New York: Routledge publishers.
- Harding, S. (2008) *Sciences from Below: Feminisms, Post colonialities, and Modernities*. Duke University Press.
- Harvey, W.S (2008) 'The social networks of British and Indian expatriate scientists in Boston.' *Geo-forum* 39, 1756–1765.
- Held, D. (2013) *Introduction to Critical Theory: Horkheimer to Habermas*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Hesse-Biber, S. (2011). *Handbook of Feminist Research: Theory and Praxis*. London: Sage publications.
- Hickman, M.J., Mai, N., and Crowley, H. (2016) *Migration and Social Cohesion in the UK*. Hampshire: Palgrave McMillan.
- Himonga, C. (2016) 'African Customary Law and Children's Rights: Intersections and Domains in a New Era'. In Sloth-Nielsen, J. Edited. *Children's Rights in Africa: A Legal Perspective*. London: Routledge.
- Hinduja, S. and Patchin, J.W. (2008) 'Cyberbullying: An Exploratory Analysis of Factors Related to Offending and Victimization'. *Deviant Behaviour* 29 (2): 129–56.
- Hinfelaar, M. (2003) *Respectable and Responsible Women: Methodist and Roman Catholic Women's Organisations in Harare, Zimbabwe, 1919–1985*. Utrecht: Bookcentrum.
- Hayes, D., and Humphries, B. (2004) *Social Work, Immigration and Asylum: Debates, Dilemmas and Ethical Issues*. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.
- Hungwe, C. (2006) 'Putting Them in Their Place: "Respectable" and "Unrespectable" Women in Zimbabwean Gender Struggles'. *Feminist Africa 6: Subaltern Sexualities* 6: 33–47.
- hook, B. (1981) *Ain't I a Woman: Black Women and Feminism*. South End Press.
- Hunt, L. (2008) 'Women Asylum Seekers and Refugees: Opportunities, Constraints and the

- Role of Agency'. *Social Policy and Society* 7 (03).
- Imam, A. (1990). 'Gender Analysis and African Social Sciences in the 1990s.' *Africa Development*, Vol. 15, No. 3/4, *Proceedings of the Sixth General Assembly of CODESRIA* 15 (3/4): 241–57.
- Inheteen, K. (2012) 'Translation Challenges: Qualitative Interviewing in a Multi-Lingual Field.' *Sociology*, 8. 28-45.
- Intemann, K. (2019) 'Feminist Standpoint Theory.' In: Atkinson, P. Delamont, A. Cernat, A. Sakshaug, J.W. and Williams, R.A. Edited. *Sage Research Methods Foundations*.
- Irikidzayi, M. (2013) 'Zimbabwean Migrants in the United Kingdom, the New Media and Networks of Survival during the Period 2000–2007'. *African Identities*. 11 (1): 33–46.
- International Organisation for Migration -on Zimbabwe migration
<https://www.iom.int/countries/zimbabwe>
- Jackson, C. (2012). 'Introduction: Marriage, Gender Relations and Social Change'. *Journal of Development Studies* 48 (1): 1–9.
- Jahoda, G. (2012) 'Critical Reflections on Some Recent Definitions of 'Culture''. *Culture and Psychology* 18 (3) 289-303.
- Jaji, R. (2016) 'The Patriarchal Logic, 'Encroaching' Femininity and Migrant Zimbabwean Women.' In Kabbo ka Muwala [The Girl's Basket]: *Migration and Mobility in Contemporary Art in Southern Africa and Eastern Africa*. Zimbabwe: Harare.
- Jeater, D. (1993) *Marriage, Perversion and Power: The Construction of Moral Discourse in Southern Rhodesia 1894-1930*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Jenkins, R. (2014) 4th Edition. *Social Identity*. Abingdon: Routledge publishers.
- Joseph, J.E. (2018) *Language and Identity: National, Ethnic, Religious*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

- Kaestle, C. E. (2016). 'Feminist Perspectives Advance Four Challenges to Transform Family Studies'. *Sex Roles* 75 (1–2): 71–77.
- Kalua, F. (2009). 'Homi Bhabha's Third Space and African Identity'. *Journal of African Cultural Studies* 21 (1): 23–32.
- Kambarami, M. (2006) 'Femininity, Sexuality and Culture: Patriarchy and Female Subordination in Zimbabwe'. Report for Africa Regional Sexuality Resource Centre, in collaboration with Health Systems Trust, South Africa and University of Fort Hare.
- Kane, A. and Leedy, T.H. (2013) *African Migrants: Patterns and Perspectives*. Indiana: Indiana University Press
- Kanu, I.A., Ndubisi, E. J. O. and Nwadiolor, L.K. (2013) *African Cultural Personalities in a World of Change: Monolithic Cultural Purity and the Emergence of New Values*. Bloomington: Author House.
- Kanuha, V.K. (2000) 'Being" Native versus "Going Native": Conducting Social Work Research as an Insider.' *Social Work*, 45 (5), 439–447.
- Kellerer, K. (2013) 'Chant Down the System, 'till Babylon falls': The Political Dimensions of Underground Hip Hop and Urban Grooves in Zimbabwe.' *Journal of Pan African Studies*, 8 (3), 43-64.
- Killian, C. (2006) *North African Women in France: Gender, Culture, and Identity*. Stanford University Press.
- Kisiang'ani, E.N.W. (2004) Decolonising Gender Studies in Africa. In Arnfred, S., Bakare – Yusuf, B., Kisiang'ani, E.W., Lewis, D., Oyewumi, O., and Steady, F.C. *African Gender Scholarship: Concepts, Methodologies and Paradigms* (CODESRIA Gender Series). Oxford: African books Collectives.
- Kofman, E. (2004) 'Gendered Global Migrations'. *International Feminist Journal of Politics* 6

(4): 643–65.

Kofman, E., and Raghuram, P. (2015) *Gendered Migrations and Global Social Reproduction*.

Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Kofman, Phizacklea, Raghuram and Sales, 2000 – migration and gender

Kokushkin, M. (2014) 'Standpoint Theory Is Dead, Long Live Standpoint Theory! Why

Standpoint Thinking Should Be Embraced by Scholars Who Do Not Identify as

Feminists?' *Journal of Arts and Humanities* volume 7 (3): 1–13.

Kolawole, M. M. (2002) 'Transcending Incongruities: Rethinking Feminisms and the

Dynamics of Identity in Africa. Agenda 54'. *Agenda: Empowering Women for Gender*

Equity: Special Issue: African Feminisms.

König, R. S. and de Regt, M. (2010). 'Family Dynamics in Transnational African Migration to

Europe: An Introduction'. *African and Black Diaspora: An International Journal* 3 (1):

1–15.

Kufakurinani, U., Pasura, D. and McGregor, J. (2014) 'Transnational Parenting and the

Emergence of "Diaspora Orphans" in Zimbabwe'. *African Diaspora* 7, no. 1. 114–38.

Kuumba, M.B. (2006) 'African women, resistance cultures and cultural resistances, *Agenda*,

20(68), 112-121.

Krzyżanowski, M., Wodak R. (2008) Multiple Identities, Migration and Belonging: 'Voices of

Migrants'. In: Caldas-Coulthard C.R., Iedema R. (eds) *Identity Trouble*. London:

Palgrave Macmillan.

La Barbera, M. (2012) 'Intersectional-Gender and the Locationality of Women "in Transit"'. In

Bonifacio G. Edited. *Feminism and Migration. International Perspectives on Migration*.

vol 1. Springer, Dordrecht.

———. 2015 'Identity and Migration: An Introduction'. In La Barbera, M.C. *Identity and*

- Migration in Europe: Multidisciplinary Perspectives*. Edited. 13:1–13. Cham: Springer International Publishing.
- Lacan, J. (1977) The function and field of speech and language in psychoanalysis. In: *Écrits: A selection*. Tr. Sheridan, A. New York: W.W. Norton.
- Lähdesmäki, T., Tuija, S., Hiltunen, K., Jäntti, S., Sääskilahti, N., Vallius, A. and Ahvenjärvi, A. (2016) 'Fluidity and Flexibility of "Belonging": Uses of the Concept in Contemporary Research'. *Acta Sociologica* 59 (3): 233–47.
- Laverty, S. M. (2003) 'Hermeneutic Phenomenology and Phenomenology: A Comparison of Historical and Methodological Considerations.' *International Journal of Qualitative Methods* 2 (3).
- Leeder, E.J. (2004) *The Family in Global Perspective: A Gendered Journey*. Thousand Oaks: Sage publishers.
- Lennon, K. (2014) 'Feminist Perspectives on the Body'. In *the Stanford Encyclopaedia of Philosophy*, edited by Edward N. Zalta, Fall.
- Letherby, G. (2003) *Feminist Research in Theory and Practice*. Buckingham: Open University Press.
- Lewis, D. (2005) 'African Gender Research and Postcoloniality: Legacies and Challenges'. In *African Gender Studies A Reader*. Edited. Oyěwùmí, O. 381–95. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Liamputtong, P. (2010) *Performing Qualitative Cross-Cultural Research*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Lincoln, Y. S. and Norman K. Edited. (2003) *Turning Points in Qualitative Research: Tying Knots in a Handkerchief*. Crossroads in Qualitative Inquiry. Walnut Creek, CA: Alta Mira Press.

- Lloyd, S A., Few, A.L.and. Allen, K.R. (2009) *Handbook of Feminist Family Studies*. London: Sage publishers.
- Lutz, H. (2010) 'Gender in the Migratory Process'. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 36 (10): 1647–63.
- Machoko, C. G. (2013) 'Religion and Interconnection with Zimbabwe: A Case Study of Zimbabwean Diasporic Canadians'. *Journal of Black Studies* 44 (5): 472–95.
- Modood, T. (2016) 'Interculturalisms. Multiculturalism and the Majority' in N. Meer, T. Modood and R. Zapata-Barrero. Edited. *Multiculturalism and Interculturalism: debating the dividing lines*, Edinburgh University Press.
- Madziva, R. and Zontini.E. (2012) 'Transnational Mothering and Forced Migration: Understanding the Experiences of Zimbabwean Mothers in the UK'. *European Journal of Women's Studies* 19 (4): 428–43.
- Magnusson, E. and Marecek, J. (2012) *Gender and Culture in Psychology: Theories and Practices*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Mahalingam, R., Balan, S.and Haritatos, J. (2008) 'Engendering Immigrant Psychology: An Intersectionality Perspective'. *Sex Roles* 59 (5–6): 326–36.
- Mahalingham, R, Balan, S and Molina, K.M., (2009) *Handbook of Feminist Family Studies: Transnational Intersectionality. A Critical Framework for Theorizing Motherhood*. In Lloyd, S A., Few, A.L.and. Allen, K.R. *Handbook of Feminist Family Studies*. London: Sage publishers.
- Mahalingham, R., Trotman. P. and Reid, R., (2007) 'Dialogues at the Margins: Women's Self-Stories and the Intersection of Identities.' *Women's Studies. International Forum*, 30, no. 30: 254–63.
- Maheshvari, N. (2010) *Agenda: Empowering Women for Gender Equity: Specail Issue*:

African Feminisms 83: 24–35.

Mahler, S. J., Chaudhuri, M. and Patil, V. (2015) 'Scaling Intersectionality: Advancing Feminist Analysis of Transnational Families'. *Sex Roles* 73 (3–4): 100–112.

Mahler, S. J., and Pessar, P.R. (2001) 'Gendered Geographies of Power: Analyzing Gender Across Transnational Spaces'. *Identities* 7 (4): 441–59.

Makahamadze, T., Isacco, A. and Chireshe, E. (2012) 'Examining the Perceptions of Zimbabwean Women about the Domestic Violence Act'. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence* 27 (4): 706–27.

Mano, W., and Willems, W. (2010) Debating 'Zimbabweanness' Diasporic Internet Forums: Technologies of Freedom? In: McGregor, J. and Primorac, R., Edited. *Zimbabwe's New Diaspora: Displacement and the Cultural Politics of Survival*. Forced Migration. Berghahn books publications.

Mama, A (1995) *Beyond the Masks: Race, Gender, and Subjectivity*. London: Routledge publishers.

Mama, A (2011) 'What does it mean to do Feminist Research in African Contexts?' *Feminist Review*, 98(1), 4–20.

Mangena, F. Edited. (2015) *Philosophy in African Traditions and Cultures: Zimbabwe Philosophical Studies, II*. Cultural Heritage and Contemporary Change. Series II, African Philosophical Studies, volume 17. Washington, D.C: Council for Research in Values and Philosophy.

Mangena, O. (2003) 'Feminism (Singular), African Feminism (Plural) and the African Diaspora.' *Agenda: Empowering Women for Gender Equity: Special Issue: African Feminisms* 17 (58).

Mangena, T. and Ndlovu, S. (2013) 'Implications and complications of bride price among the

- Shona and Ndebele people of Zimbabwe.' *International Journal of Asian Social Science*. 3 (2), 472-481.
- Mapedzahama, Z. (2014) *Work–Family Interface in Sub-Saharan Africa: Challenges and Responses*. Switzerland: Springer International Publishing.
- Marsha, H. (2007) 'If the Shoe Fits: Authenticity, Authority and Agency Feminist Diasporic Research'. *Women's Studies International Forum* 30 (1): 70–80.
- Martin-Shaw, C. M. (2015). *Women and Power in Zimbabwe: Promises of Feminism*. Baltimore, United States: University of Illinois Press.
- Massey, D. B. (1994) *Space, Place and Gender*. Cambridge: Polity press publishers.
- Mate, R. (2002) 'Wombs as God's Laboratories: Pentecostal Discourses of Femininity in Zimbabwe'. *Africa: Journal of the International African Institute*. 72, (4) 549-568.
- Mauthner, M., Birch, M., Jessop, J. and Miller, T. Edited. (2002). *Ethics in Qualitative Research*. London, Thousand Oaks, CA; New Delhi: Sage.
- Mauthner, M. and Doucet, A. (1998) Reflections on a Voice centred Relational Method: Analysing Maternal and Domestic Voices. In Edwards, R. and Ribbens, J. Edited. *Feminist Dilemmas in Qualitative Research: Public Knowledge and Private Lives*. London: Sage publications.
- Masondo, S.T. (2014) 'The African indigenous churches' spiritual resources for democracy and social cohesion.' *Verbum et Ecclesia* 35(3), 1341 -1348 pages.
- Mavroudi, E. (2007) 'Diaspora as Process: (De)Constructing Boundaries'. *Geography Compass* 1 (3): 467–79.
- Mawere, M. and Mawere, M. A. (2010) 'The Changing Philosophy of African Marriage: The Relevance of the Shona Customary Marriage Practice Of'. *Journal of African Studies*

and Development 2 (9): 224–33.

Mawere, M., and Mubaya, T.R. (2014). *African Cultures, Memory and Space: Living the Past Presence in Zimbabwean Heritage*. Bamenda, Cameroon: Langaa RPCIG.

Maxwell, S. Z. (2017) 'A Theoretical Exposition of Feminism and Womanism in African Context'. *Gender and Behaviour* 15 (2): 9181–93.

May, T. (2011) 4th Edition. *Social Research: Issues, Methods and Process*. Maidenhead, Berks: Open University Press/Mc Graw-Hill.

Mays, V. M., and Comas-Díaz, L. (1988) 'Feminist therapy with ethnic minority populations: A closer look at Blacks and Hispanics'. In M. A. Dutton-Douglas & L. E. A. Walker. Edited. *Developments in clinical psychology. Feminist psychotherapies: Integration of therapeutic and feminist systems*. New Jersey: Ablex Publishing.

Maynard, M. and Purvis J. Edited. (2013) *Researching Women's Lives from a Feminist Perspective*. Oxon: Routledge publishers.

Mbakogu, I. (2014) Who Is the Parent and Who Is the Kid? The Changing Face of Parenting for African Parents in the Diaspora. In Uwakweh, A., Rotich, J.P., and Okpala, C.O. Edited. *Engaging the Diaspora: Engaging African Families*. Plymouth: Lexington publishers.

Mbiti, J. S. (1990) 2nd Edition. *African Religions & Philosophy*. Oxford: Heinemann Education publishers.

McDowell.L. (1999) 'Gender, Identity, and Place: Understanding Feminist Geographies - by, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

McGregor, J. (2007) "'Joining the BBC (British Bottom Cleaners)': Zimbabwean Migrants and the UK Care Industry'. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 33 (5): 801–24.

— — — (2008a). 'Abject Spaces, Transnational Calculations: Zimbabweans in Britain

- Navigating Work, Class and the Law'. *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 33 (4): 466–82.
- — — (2008b). 'Children and "African Values": Zimbabwean Professionals in Britain Reconfiguring Family Life'. *Environment and Planning A* 40 (3): 596–614.
- — — (2009) 'Associational links with home among Zimbabweans in the UK: reflections on long-distance nationalisms.' *Global Networks: The Journal of Transnational Affairs*, 9 (2), 185-208.
- McGregor, J. and Primorac, R. (eds). (2010) *Zimbabwe's New Diaspora: Displacement and the Cultural Politics of Survival*. Studies in Forced Migration. NY: Berghahn Books.
- McLafferty, I. (2004) 'Focus Group Interviews as a Data Collecting Strategy'. *Journal of Advanced Nursing* 48 (2): 187–94.
- Mekgwe, P. (2010) 'Post Africa(n) Feminism?' *Third Text* 24 (2): 189–94.
- Messer, M., Schroeder, R. and Woda, R. (2012) *Migrations: Interdisciplinary Perspectives*. Springer-Verlag Wien.
- Merleau-Ponty, M. (2005) *Phenomenology of Perception*. Translated by Colin Smith. London: Routledge publishers.
- Merrill, D.M. (2007) *Mothers-in-law and Daughters-in-law: Understanding the Relationship and What Makes Them Friends or Foe*. Portsmouth: Greenwood Publishing Group.
- Merry, L. S., Pelaez, S., and Edwards, N.C. (2017) Refugees, asylum-seekers and undocumented migrants and the experience of parenthood: a synthesis of the qualitative literature. *Globalization and Health* 13(75).
- Michael, K. and Pile, S. (1993) *Place and the Politics of Identity. Edited Book*. London, New York: Routledge publishers.
- Mikell, G. Edited. (1997) *African Feminism: The Politics of Survival in Sub-Saharan Africa*.

- Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Mirza, H. S. (2013) "'A Second Skin": Embodied Intersectionality, Transnationalism and Narratives of Identity and Belonging among Muslim Women in Britain'. *Women's Studies International Forum* 36 (January): 5–15.
- Mitra, A. (2001) 'Marginal Voices in Cyberspace.' *New Media & Society*, 3(1), pp. 29–48.
- Mitton, L. and Aspinall, P. (2011) 'Black Africans in the UK: Integration or segregation? Understanding population trends and processes *ESRC report*.
- Moghissi, H. Edited. (2006) *Muslim Diaspora: Gender, Culture, and Identity*. Routledge Islamic Studies. London; New York: Routledge.
- Mohanty, C.T. (2003) "Under Western Eyes" Revisited: Feminist Solidarity through Anticapitalistic Struggles. *Signs*, 28, (2), 499-535.
- Morgan, D.L. (1998) *Focus Groups as Qualitative Research. Qualitative Research Methods Series*. London: Sage publications.
- Mokomane, Z, Edited. (2014) *Work–Family Interface in Sub-Saharan Africa: Challenges and Responses*. Cham: Springer International Publishing.
- Morley, D. (2001) 'Belongings: Place, Space and Identity in a Mediated World'. *European Journal of Cultural Studies* 4 (4): 425–48.
- Morrow, O., Hawkins, R. and Kern, L. (2015) 'Feminist Research in Online Spaces'. *Gender, Place & Culture* 22 (4): 526–43.
- Moss, B.A. (1991) 'Holding Body and Soul Together: Women, Autonomy and Christianity in Colonial Zimbabwe.' PhD dissertation, Indiana University,
- Moyo, A. (2012) 'Reconceptualising the "Paramountcy Principle": Beyond the Individualistic Construction of the Best Interests of the Child'. *African Human rights Law Journal* 36.
- Moyo, O. N. and Kawewe, S.M. (2002) 'The Dynamics of a Racialized, Gendered, Ethnicized,

- and Economically Stratified Society: Understanding the Socio-Economic Status of Women in Zimbabwe'. *Feminist Economics* 8 (2): 163–81.
- Mtsetwa, S., and Gwanzura, T.N.R. (2017) 'Interrogating Child Rights Teaching in Bindura Schools – Zimbabwe.' *International Journal of Educational Sciences*, 18:1-3, 200-213.
- Mubaya, T. R. and Mawere, M. (2014) *African Cultures, Memory and Space: Living the Past Presence in Zimbabwean Heritage*. Cameroon: Langaa Research and Publishing Common Initiative Group (RPCIG) publishers.
- Muchabaiwa, W. (2017) 'The Small House Phenomenon and Polygyny in Zimbabwe: A Problematic Context for Child Socialisation and Development.' *Journal of Pan African Studies*, 10 (3).
- Mugadza, T., Mujeyi, B., Stout, B., Wali, N., Renzaho, A.M.N. (2019) 'Childrearing Practices Among Sub-Saharan African Migrants in Australia: a Systematic Review.' *Journal of Child and Family Studies*, 28(11), 2927-2941.
- Mukonyora, I. (2006) *Women of the Diaspora Within: the Masowe Apostles Women and Religion in African Diaspora*, University of Princeton WRAD Project, Johns Hopkins Press.
- Mulinari, D. and Sandell, K. (1999) 'Exploring the Notion of Experience in Feminist Thought',. *Acta Sociologica*, 42(4), 287–297.
- Munyaradzi, M., Mubaya. R.T. and Mukusha, J. Edited. (2017) *The African Conundrum: Rethinking the Trajectories of Historical, Cultural, Philosophical and Developmental Experiences of Africa*. Cameroon: Langaa Research and Publishing Common Initiative Group Research and Publishers.
- Musoro, L., Madziva, C. and Magaisa, A.T. (2010) 'Building Bridges Between Host and Home', Conference paper at CRONEM Annual Conference, University of Surrey.

- Mutekwe, E., Maphosa, C., Machingambi, S., Ndofirepi, A.P., and Wadesango, N. (2013) Exploring the Teachers' Role in the Social Construction of Gender through the Hidden Culture Curriculum and Pedagogy: A Case of Zimbabwe. *Journal of Social Sciences*, 37 (3), 307-31.
- Mutepfa, M., and Jacobus, M., and Chiganga, G. (2014) 'Towards respecting children's rights, obligations and responsibilities: The Zimbabwean case.' *School Psychology International*. 35. 241-252.
- Mutsvairo, B. (2016) *Digital Activism in the Social Media Era: Critical Reflections on Emerging Trends in Sub-Saharan Africa*. Cham: Palgrave MacMillan.
- Mpofu, S. (2013) 'Social media and the politics of ethnicity in Zimbabwe.' *Ecquid Novi: African Journalism Studies*, 34 (1), 115-122.
- Mvududu, S. C., and McFadden. P. (2001) *Reconceptualizing the Family in a Changing Southern African Environment*. Women and Law in Southern Africa Research Trust.
- Naidu, M. (2010) 'Wrestling with Standpoint Theory... Some Thoughts on Standpoint and African Feminism'. *Agenda*, 24:83, 24-35.
- Nakagawa, M., and Wotipka, C.M. (2016) 'The Worldwide Incorporation of Women and Women's Rights Discourse in Social Science Textbooks, 1970–2008.' *Comparative Education Review*, 60, (3) 501–529.
- Nakano, G.E., Chang, G. and Forcey, L.R. Edited. (1994) *Mothering: Ideology, Experience, and Agency*. Perspectives on Gender. New York: Routledge.
- Narayan, U. (1997) *Dislocating Cultures: Identities, Traditions, and Third-World Feminism*. Thinking Gender. New York: Routledge.
- 1998. 'Essence of Culture and a Sense of History: A Feminist Critique of Cultural Essentialism'. *Hypatia* 13 (2): 86–106.

- Narayan, U. and Harding, S. (2000) *Decentering the Center: Philosophy for a Multicultural, Postcolonial, and Feminist World*. Indianapolis: Indiana University Press.
- Nash, J.C. (2008) 'Re-Thinking Intersectionality'. *Feminist Review Journal* 89: 1–15.
- Ndhlovu, F. (2007) 'The Role of Discourse in Identity Formation and the Manufacture of Ethnic Minorities in Zimbabwe'. *Journal of Multicultural Discourses* 2 (2): 131–47.
- (2014). *Becoming an African Diaspora in Australia Language, Culture, Identity*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Ndlovu, T. (2010) 'Where Is My Home? Rethinking Person, Family, Ethnicity and Home under Increased Transnational Migration by Zimbabweans'. *African Identities*, 8:2, 117-130.
- Ndlovu – Gatsheni, S. J. (2007) 'Re-thinking the Colonial Encounter in Zimbabwe in the Early Twentieth Century.' *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 33:1, 173-191.
- (2014) 'Global Coloniality and the Challenges of Creating African Futures.' *Strategic Review for Southern Africa*, 36, (2).
- Neubauer, E. Witkop, C.T. and Varpio, L. (2019) 'How Phenomenology Can Help Us Learn from the Experiences of Others'. *Perspectives on Medical Education* 8, no. 2 pp 90–97.
- Njambi, W. N. (2004) 'Dualisms and Female Bodies in Representations of African Female Circumcision: A Feminist Critique'. *Feminist Theory* 5 (3), 281–303.
- Nkealah, N. (2016) (West) 'African Feminisms and Their Challenges.' *Journal of Literary Studies*, 32:2, 61-74.
- Nnaemeka, O. Edited. (1997) *The Politics of (m)Othering: Womanhood, Identity, and Resistance in African Literature*. London: Routledge publishers.
- Nnaemeka, O. (2005) *Female Circumcision and the Politics of Knowledge: African Women in Imperialist Discourses*. Greenwood Publishing Group.
- Norwood, C. (2013) 'Perspective in Africana Feminism; Exploring Expressions of Black

- Feminism/Womanism in the African Diaspora: Perspectives in Africana Feminism'. *Sociology Compass* 7 (3): 225–36.
- Nowak, J. (2009) 'Gendered Perceptions of Migration among Skilled Female Ghanaian Nurses'. *Gender & Development* 17 (2): 269–80.
- Nyamnjoh, F.B. (2005) 'Madams and Maids in Southern Africa: coping with uncertainties, and the art of mutual zombification.' *Africa Spectrum*, 40, (2), 181-196.
- Nzegwu, N.U. (2006) *Family Matters: Feminist Concepts in African Philosophy of Culture*. Albany: State University of NY press.
- Nzenza Shand, S. (1997) *Songs to an African Sunset: A Zimbabwean Story*. Victoria, Australia: Lonely Planet Publications.
- Nzira, V. (2011) *Social Care with African Families in the UK*. London: Routledge publishing.
- Oakley, A. (1998) 'Gender, Methodology and People's Ways of Knowing: Some Problems with Feminism and the Paradigm Debate in Social Science'. *Sociology* 32 (4), 707–31.
- Office of National Statistics, (August 2019), Breakdown of Ethnicity in employment, <https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/earningsandworking/hours/articles/ethnicitypaygapsingreatbritain/2018#ethnicity-breakdowns>.
- Ogola, G. (2011) 'Social media as a hetero-glossic discursive space and Kenya's emergent alternative/citizen experiment.' *Ecquid Novi African Journalism Studies* 36(4):66-81.
- Ogundipe-Leslie, M. (1994) *Re-Creating Ourselves: African Women & Critical Transformations*. New Jersey: Africa World Press.
- Oheneba-Sakyi, Y. and Takyi, B.K. (2006) *African Families at the Turn of the 20th century*. California: Praeger publishing.
- Olufunke, O.M. and Vaughan, O. (2011) *Transnational Africa and Globalization*. NY: Palgrave MacMillan.

- Okpewho, I., Boyce Davies, C., and Mazrui, A.A. Edited. (2001) *The African Diaspora: African Origins and New World Identities*. Indianapolis: Indianapolis University Press.
- Okpewho, I., and Nzegwu, N. Edited. (2009) *The New African Diaspora*. Indianapolis: Indiana University Press.
- Osirim, M. (2008). African Women in the New Diaspora: Transnationalism and the (Re)Creation of Home. *African and Asian Studies*. 7. 367-394.
- Owomoyela, O. (2002) *'Culture and Customs of Zimbabwe*. West London: Greenwood Press.
- Oyěwùmí, O. (1997) *The Invention of Women: Making an African Sense of Western Gender Discourses*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- (2000). 'Family Bonds/Conceptual Binds: African Notes on Feminist Epistemologies'. *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 25 (4): 1093–98.
- (2002) 'Conceptualising gender: The Eurocentric foundations of feminist concepts and the Challenge of African Epistemologies.' *Ajenda: A journal of African women's studies*, 2 (1).
- Palmary, I. Burman, E. Chantler, K. and Kiguwa, P. (2010) *Gender and Migration: Feminist Interventions*. NY: Zed Books.
- Palmer, M., Larkin, M., de Visser, R. and Fadden, G. (2010) 'Developing an Interpretative Phenomenological Approach to Focus Group Data.' *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 7 (2), 99-121.
- Palenga – Möllenbeck, E. (2013) 'Care Chains in Eastern and Central Europe: Male and Female Domestic Work at the Intersections of Gender, Class, and Ethnicity.' *Journal of Immigrant & Refugee Studies*, 11(4), 364-383,
- Papastergiadis, N. (2015) *The Turbulence of Migration: Globalization, Deterritorialization and Hybridity*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

- Pasura, D. (2008) 'Gendering the Diaspora: Zimbabwean Migrants in Britain'. *African Diaspora* 1 (1): 86–109.
- (2010) 'Competing Meanings of the Diaspora: The Case of Zimbabweans in Britain'. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 36 (9): 1445–61
- (2012a) 'Religious Transnationalism: The Case of Zimbabwean Catholics in Britain'. *Journal of Religion in Africa* 42 (1): 26–53.
- (2012b) 'A Fractured Transnational Diaspora: The Case of Zimbabweans in Britain: Zimbabwean Diaspora'. *International Migration* 50 (1): 143–61.
- (2013) 'Modes of Incorporation and Transnational Zimbabwean Migration to Britain'. *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 36 (1): 199–218.
- (2014) *African Transnational Diasporas Fractured Communities and Plural Identities of Zimbabweans in Britain*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Pasura, D. and Christou, A. (2018) 'Theorizing Black (African) Transnational Masculinities'. *Men and Masculinities*, 21 (4) 521-546.
- Patterson, T.R., and Kelly, R.G. (2000) 'Unfinished Migrations: Reflections on the African Diaspora and the Making of the Modern World.' *Africa Studies Review*, 43, (1), 11-45.
- Pedraza, S. (1991) 'Women and Migration: The Social Consequences of Gender.' *Annual Review of Sociology* 17, 303–25
- Pedwell, C. (2010) *Feminism, Culture and Embodied Practice: The Rhetorics of Comparison*. London: Routledge publishers.
- Penrod, J., Preston, D. B., Cain, R. E., and Starks, M. T. (2003) 'A Discussion of Chain Referral As a Method of Sampling Hard-to-Reach Populations', *Journal of Transcultural*

- Nursing, 14(2), pp. 100–107.
- Perreira, C. and Ibrahim, J. 2010). 'On the Bodies of Women: the common ground between Islam and Christianity in Nigeria.' *Journal of Third World Quarterly*, 31, (6).
- Pessar, P. R. and Mahler, S. J. (2003) 'Transnational Migration: Bringing Gender In.' *International Migration Review*, 37(3), 812–846.
- Phoenix, A., and Pattynama, P. (2006) 'Intersectionality.' *European Journal of Women's Studies*, 13 (3), 187-192.
- Portes, A. (2010) 'Migration and Social Change: Some Conceptual Reflections'. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 36 (10): 1537–63.
- Pringle, J., Drummond, J., McLafferty, E. and Hendry, C. (2011). 'Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis: A Discussion and Critique'. *Nurse Researcher*, no. 3: 20–24.
- Raffaetà, R. (2016) 'Migration and Parenting: Reviewing the Debate and Calling for Future Research'. *International Journal of Migration, Health and Social Care* 12 (1): 38–50.
- Raftopoulos, B. and Mlambo, A. (2008) *Becoming Zimbabwe. A History from the Pre-Colonial Period to 2008*. African Books Collective.
- Ralph, D. and Staeheli, L.A. (2011) 'Home and Migration: Mobilities, Belongings and Identities'. *Geography Compass* 5 (7): 517–30.
- Ramazanoglu, C. and Holland, J. (1999) Tripping over Experience: some problems in feminist epistemology, *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education*, 20:3, 381-392.
- Ramazanoglu, C. and Holland, J. (2002) *Feminist Methodology: Challenges and Choices*. London; Thousand Oaks, Calif: Sage.

- Rassokha, M. (2010) 'Language Identity: Issues of Theory and Practice.' *Asian Englishes*, 13(1) 20-33.
- Ratner, C. (2000) 'Agency and Culture'. *Journal for the Theory of Social Behaviour* 30 (4): 413–34.
- Rehman, H., and. Walker, E. (1995) 'Researching Black and Minority Ethnic Groups'. *Health Education Journal* 54 (4): 489–500.
- Reid, P. T., and Comas-Díaz, L. (1990) 'Gender and Ethnicity: Perspectives on Dual Status.' *Sex Roles: A Journal of Research*, 22(7-8), 397–408.
- Reid, K., Flowers, P. and Larkin, M. (2005) 'Exploring Lived Experience'. *The Psychologist*, 18 (1).
- Renzaho; A. M. N., Green, J., Mellor, D. and Swinburn, B. (2010) 'Parenting, Family Functioning and Lifestyle in a New Culture: The Case of African Migrants in Melbourne, Victoria, Australia'. *Children and Family Social Work* 16: 228–40.
- Rey, J. (2013) 'Mermaids and Spirit Spouses: Rituals as Technologies of Gender in Transnational African Pentecostal Spaces.' *Religion and Gender*, 3 (1) 60-75.
- Reynolds, T. (2002) 'Re-thinking a black feminist standpoint.' *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 25 (4), 591-606.
- Riach, K. (2009) 'Exploring Participant-Centred Reflexivity in the Research Interview'. *Sociology* 43 (2): 356–70.
- Ribbens, J. and Edwards, R. Edited. (1998) *Feminist dilemmas in qualitative research: public knowledge and private lives*. London: Sage publications.
- Rolin, K. (2009) 'Standpoint Theory as a Methodology for the Study of Power Relations'. *Hypatia* 24 (4), 218–26.
- Rodriguez, C.R., Tsikata, D., and Adomako-Ampofo, A. Edited. (2015) *Transatlantic*

- Feminisms: Women and Gender Studies in Africa and the Diaspora*. London: Lexington books.
- Rwafa (2016) 'Culture and Religion as Sources of Gender Inequality: Rethinking Challenges Women Face in Contemporary Africa.' *Journal of Literary Studies*, 32, (1).
- Ryan, L. (2011) 'Migrants' Social Networks and Weak Ties: Accessing Resources and Constructing Relationships Post-Migration'. *The Sociological Review* 59 (4): 707–24.
- Schmidt, E. (1992) *Peasants, Traders, and Wives: Shona Women in the History of Zimbabwe, 1870-1939*. Harare: Baobab publishers.
- Schoumaker, B., Flahaux, M.L., Schans, D., Beauchemin, C., Mazzucato, V., and Sakho, P. (2015) 'Changing patterns of African Migration: A Comparative Analysis.' ... In Beauchemin, C. Edited. *Migration between Africa and Europe: Trends, Factors and Effects*. New York: Springer-Verlag and INED.
- Shenje-Peyton, A. (1996) 'Balancing Gender, Equality, Cultural Identity: Marriage Payments in Post-Colonial Zimbabwe'. *Harv. Hum. Rts. J.* 9: 105.
- Shih, K. Y. and Pyke, K. (2016) 'Seeing Mothers-in-Law Through the Lens of the Mothering Ideology: An Interview Analysis of Taiwanese, Taiwanese American, and Mexican American Daughters-in-Law', *Journal of Family Issues*, 37(14), pp. 1968–1993.
- Shields, S.A. (2008) 'Gender: An Intersectionality Perspective.' *Sex Roles*, 59, 301–311.
- Shumba, A. (2002) 'Teacher Conceptualization of Child Abuse in Schools in the New Millennium', *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 17(4), pp. 403–415.
- Shuval, J.T. (2000) 'Diaspora Migration: Definitional Ambiguities and a Theoretical Paradigm'. *International Migration* 38 (5): 41–56.
- Sigona, N. Gamlen, A.J., Liberatore, G. and Neveu, H. Edited. (2015) *Diasporas Reimagined: Spaces, Practices and Belonging*. Oxford: Oxford Diasporas Programme.

Sika, V. (2013). 'Feminisms and Culture: How Fashion and Dress Shape Women's Identities'.

BUWA! Feminism and Culture: A Journal of African Women's Experiences 2 (2).

Sloan, A, and Bowe, B. (2014) 'Phenomenology and Hermeneutic Phenomenology: The

Philosophy, the Methodologies, and Using Hermeneutic Phenomenology to

Investigate Lecturers' Experiences of Curriculum Design.' *Qualitative Quantitative* 48,
1291–1303.

Smith, D. E. (1997) 'Comment on Hekman's "Truth and Method: Feminist Standpoint Theory

Revisited"' . *Signs* 22 (2): 392–98.

Smith, J.A. (1996) 'Beyond the divide between cognition and discourse'. *Psychology and*

Health, 11, 261–271.

Smith, J. A. (2019). 'Participants and Researchers Searching for Meaning: Conceptual

Developments for Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis'. *Qualitative Research in*
Psychology 16 (2): 166–81.

Smith, J.A., Flowers, P. and Larkin, M. (2009) *Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis:*

Theory, Method and Research. London: Sage publishers.

Smith, J. and Osborn, M. (2003). Interpretive phenomenological analysis. In J.A. Smith

Edited. *Qualitative psychology: A practical guide to research methods*. London: Sage.

Smith - Iyall, K. E., and Leavy, P. (2008) *Hybrid Identities: Theoretical and Empirical*

Examinations. Netherlands: Brill, Hotel publishing.

Smith, J., Jarman, M. and Osborn, M. (1999) Doing interpretive phenomenological analysis.'

In M. Murray and K. Chamberlain. Edited. *Qualitative health psychology*. London:
Sage.

Somerville, W., Sriskandarajah, D., and Latorre, M. (2009) United Kingdom: A Reluctant

Country of Immigration, July 21. <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/united->

[kingdom-reluctant-country-immigration.](#)

Song, M. (2003) *Choosing Ethnic Identity*. Cambridge, Polity Press: Blackwell Publishers.

Souleymane B. D., Mama, A., Melber, H. and Nyamnjoh, F.B. (2001) *Identity and Beyond: Rethinking Africanity*. Nordic Africa Institute.

Sprague, J. (2016) *Feminist Methodologies for Critical Researchers: Bridging Differences*. Toronto: Altamira press.

Sumi, C., Williams Crenshaw, K. and McCall, L. (2013) 'Toward a Field of Intersectionality Studies: Theory, Applications, and Praxis'. *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 38 (4): 785–810.

Stacey, J. (1988) Can there be a feminist ethnography? *Women's Studies International Forum*. 11, (1), 21-27

Stanley, L., and Wise, S. (1990) 'Method, methodology and epistemology in feminist research processes.' In Stanley, L. Edited. *Feminist praxis*. London: Routledge.

Stets, J.E., and Burke, P.J. (2000) 'Identity Theory and Social Identity Theory.' *Social Psychology Quarterly*, 63, 224-237.

Sylvester, C. (1995) 'African and Western Feminisms: World-Traveling the Tendencies and Possibilities.' *Signs: Journal of women in culture and society* 20 (4): 941–69.

Tamale, S. (2006) 'The Right to Culture and the Culture of Rights: A Critical Perspective on Women's Sexual Rights in Africa'. *Feminist Legal Studies* 16 (1): 47–69.

Tettey, W. J., and Puplampu, K.P. (2006). *The African Diaspora in Canada: Negotiating Identity and Belonging*. Canada: University of Calgary Press.

Tevera, M., and Mubaya, T.R. (2014) *African Cultures, Memory and Space. Living the Past Presence in Zimbabwean Heritage: Living the Past Presence in Zimbabwean Heritage*. African Books Collect. Oxford: Project Muse.

The Telegraph, Sunday 9 August 2015, Adam Withnall.

Foreign Secretary Philip Hammond says African migrants are threatening our 'standard of living.' <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/philip-hammond-says-african-migrants-are-threatening-europes-standard-of-living-10447207.html>

Thondhlana, J. Madziva, R. and McGrath, S. (2016) 'Negotiating Employability: Migrant Capitals and Networking Strategies for Zimbabwean Highly Skilled Migrants in the UK'. *The Sociological Review* 64 (3): 575–92.

Tinarwo, M.T. (2015) 'Forging Ties: Social Capital Utilization by Zimbabwean Social Workers in Britain'. *Journal of International Migration and Integration* 16 (4): 851–69.

——— (2017) 'Discrimination as Experienced by Overseas Social Workers Employed within the British Welfare State'. *International Social Work* 60 (3): 707–19.

Tinarwo, M. T. and Pasura, (2014) 'Negotiating and Contesting Gendered and Sexual Identities in the Zimbabwean Diaspora'. *Journal of Southern African Studies* 40 (3) 521–38.

Tripp, A. M., Casimiro, I., Kwesiga, J. and Mungwa, A. (2008) *African Women's Movements: Transforming Political Landscapes*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Turino, T. (2000) *Nationalists, Cosmopolitans, and Popular Music in Zimbabwe*. University of Chicago Press.

Tsikata, D., and Amanor – Wilks, D.E. (2009) 'Land, labour and gendered livelihoods.' *Feminist Africa*, 2009

Tsolidis, G. Edited. (2014) *Migration, Diaspora and Identity*. Vol. 6. International Perspectives on Migration. Dordrecht: Springer publishers.

Usher, R. (1996) 'Textuality and Reflexivity in Educational Research.' In Scott, D., and Usher, R. Edited. *Understanding Research*. London: Routledge.

- Uwakweh, P.A., Rotich, J.P., and Okpala, C. O. (2014) *Engaging the Diaspora: Migration and African Families*. Plymouth: Lexington Books.
- Van Hear, N. (2010) 'Theories of Migration and Social Change.' *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 36 (10), 1531-1536.
- Van Manen, M. (2017) 'Phenomenology in Its Original Sense'. *Qualitative Health Research*. 27(6) 810–825.
- Van Nes, F., Abma, T., Jonsson, H. and Deeg, D. (2010) Language differences in qualitative research: is meaning lost in translation? *European journal of ageing*, 7(4), 313–316.
- Vasileiou, K., Barnett, J., Thorpe, S. and Young, T. (2018) Characterising and justifying sample size sufficiency in interview-based studies: Systematic analysis of qualitative health research over a 15-year period. *BMC Medical Research Methodology*, 18,148.
- Vatsa, A. (2016) 'Women in a Multicultural Diaspora: Dilemmas of Gender and Culture'. *Diaspora Studies* 9 (1): 64–75.
- Venganai, H. (2017). 'Negotiating Identities through the "cultural Practice" of Labia Elongation among Urban Shona Women and Men in Contemporary Zimbabwe'. *Culture Unbound: Journal of Current Cultural Research* 8 (3): 306–24.
- Vera, Y. (1998) 'Butterfly Burning'. Farrar, Straus and Giroux publishers.
- Vera - Larrucea, C. (2015) The Turkish Generation Born in Sweden: Bridge Builders or New Swedes? In Baser, B., and Levin, P.T. Edited. *Migration from Turkey to Sweden: Integration, Belonging and Transnational Community*. London, NY: I.B. Tauris and Co.
- Vertovec, S. (2001) 'Transnationalism and Identity'. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 27 (4): 573–82.
- (2003) Migration and other Modes of Transnationalism: Towards Conceptual Cross Fertilization.' In *International Migration Review*, 37 (3), 641-6.

- Virdee, S., and McGeever, B. (2018) 'Racism, Crisis, Brexit.' *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 41 (10), 1802-1819.
- Viriri, A., Viriri, A., and Chapwanya, C. (2011) 'The influence of popular music, in particular urban grooves lyrics on the Zimbabwean youth: The case of the Troika, Maskiri, Winky D and Extra Large.' *Muziki*, 8(1), 82-95.
- Wane, N. (2011) African Indigenous Feminist Thought. An Anti-Colonial Thought. In Wane, N.N., and Marlon Simmons, A.K. Edited. *The Politics of Cultural Knowledge*, Leiden The Netherlands: Brill/ Sense.
- Wang, Z., Tchernev, J.M., and Solloway, T. (2012) 'A dynamic longitudinal examination of social media use, needs, and gratifications among college students.' *Computers in Human Behavior* (28), 1829-1839.
- Weedon, C. (2004) *Identity and Culture*. Maidenhead: Open University Press.
- Werbner, P. Modood, T. and Bhabha, H.L. (2015) *Debating Cultural Hybridity Multi-Cultural Identities and the Politics of Anti-Racism*. London: ZED Books.
- Whitehorn, J., Ayonrinde, O. and Maingay, S. 2002 'Female genital mutilation: Cultural and psychological implications.' *Journal of Sexual and Relationship Therapy*, 17 (2).
- Welsh-Asante, K. (2000) Zimbabwe 'Dance: Rhythmic Forces, Ancestral Voices : an Aesthetic Analysis.' Eritrea: Africa World Press.
- West, M. O. (2002). *The Rise of an African Middle Class: Colonial Zimbabwe, 1898-1965*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Willard, N.E. (2005) *Cyberbullying and Cyberthreats: Responding to the Challenge of Online Social Aggression, Threats, and Distress*. Illinois: Research Press.
- Willig, C. and Stainton Rogers, W. Edited. (2008) *The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research in Psychology*. London: Sage publishers.

- Wilkinson, S. (1993) 'Feminism and Psychology: Two Years on.' *Feminism & Psychology*, 3(1), 5–9.
- Willem, W. and Mano, W. (2017) *Everyday Media Culture in Africa: Audiences and Users*. London: Routledge.
- Wolf, D. L., Edited. (1996) *Feminist Dilemmas in Fieldwork*. Boulder, Colo: Westview Press.
- Wood, N, and Waite, L. (2011) 'Editorial: Scales of Belonging'. *Emotion, Space and Society*, (4), 201–202.
- Woodley, X.M and Lockard, M (2016) 'Womanism and Snowball Sampling: Engaging Marginalized Populations in Holistic Research.' *The qualitative report*, 21 (2), 321-329.
- Yuval-Davis, N. (2006) 'Intersectionality and Feminist Politics'. *European Journal of Women's Studies* 13 (3): 193–209.
- Yuval-Davis, N. (2007) 'Intersectionality, Citizenship and Contemporary Politics of Belonging'. *Critical Review of International Social and Political Philosophy* 10 (4), 561–74.
- (2011) *The Politics of Belonging: Intersectional Contestations*. London: Sage publishers.
- Yuval-Davis, N. Anthias, F. and Kofman, E. (2005) 'Secure Borders and Safe Haven and the Gendered Politics of Belonging: Beyond Social Cohesion'. *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 28 (3): 513–35.
- Zahavi, D. (2019) 'Getting It Quite Wrong: Van Manen and Smith on Phenomenology'. *Qualitative Health Research*. 29(6) 900–907.
- Zezeza, P. T. (2005) 'Rewriting the African diaspora: Beyond the Black Atlantic.' *African Affairs*, 104 (414), 35–68

Zembe, C. R. (2018). *Zimbabwean Communities in Britain*. Cham: Springer International Publishing.

Zontini, E. (2004) 'Immigrant women in Barcelona: Coping with the consequences of transnational lives.' *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 30 (6), 1113-1144,

Zvobgo, C. J. M. (2009) *A History of Zimbabwe, 1890-2000 and Postscript, Zimbabwe*. New Castle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

Appendices

Appendix A: Participant Information Sheet

Gender, Culture and Belonging in the Diasporic Space: Zimbabwean Women in the UK

Thank you for reading this and for taking part in the study.

My name is Loreen Chikwira and a PhD student at Edgehill University. I am inviting you to take part in a project, exploring women's experiences of moving from Zimbabwe to the United Kingdom; specifically, how they might feel about themselves when living in the different countries. The research will help to understand Zimbabwean women's experiences and give them a chance to tell their story in their own words.

What will happen to me if I take part?

If you are happy to take part in this research, I will interview you about your life in Zimbabwe, and your life in England. The interview will last about an hour and half and with your permission it will be tape recorded. I attach a copy of the questions for you to read.

Will I remain anonymous throughout the research?

Yes. Only I will know your identity. You will never be identified in any way at any point in this study or in any work that results from it. With your permission I will use quotes from what you tell me in the interview, but you will always remain anonymous.

What are the disadvantages of taking part in the study?

You will be asked to give up about an hour of your time to take part in the interview. There may be some questions which you do not want to answer, but this is fine. You can choose what you wish to say, and you do not have to answer any questions you do not wish to. If you become distressed at any time during the research, I have provided a list of BACP accredited counsellors you may contact, though I am unable to provide any payment for this.

What are the advantages of taking part in the study?

You will get to tell your story and you may enjoy taking part in a research study and receive a shopping voucher as a token of appreciation for taking part.

Do I have to take part in the study?

No. It is your choice as to whether or not you take part. Also, you are free to stop the interview at any time and it is also ok for you not to answer questions you do not wish to. You can also withdraw from the study for one month after the interview has taken place. In this case you would need to contact me on the email given in this information sheet.

If you do decide to take part, you will be given a copy of this information sheet to keep and be asked to sign the attached consent form.

Will my interview be kept securely?

All interview material will be collected and stored in accordance with the data protection act (1998).

This means that:

Your information will be treated in the utmost confidentiality and no names will be used in this research. Any identifying information will be removed from the interview. The interview material will be stored on an encrypted file on a password protected personal computer. On completion of the project the interview will be destroyed. My University, academic supervisors and I are the only people with access to the raw data from the recordings.

WHAT IF I HAVE ANY QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS?

Please feel free to ask me any questions and I will try to answer these as best I can.

Loreen Chikwira

Email : 23845066@edgehill.ac.uk

If you have any complaints about the research, please contact:

Dr Zana Vathi, Reader in Social Sciences

zana.vathi@edgehill.ac.uk

Thank you for taking the time to read this information.

Appendix B: Consent Form

Gender, Culture and Belonging in the Diasporic Space: Zimbabwean Women in the UK.

Please initial the boxes to indicate your consent

I have read and understood the Participant information sheet ☐
and I have been given the opportunity to ask questions about the research.

I give consent for the interview to be tape recorded. ☐

I understand that the information I give will be kept confidential ☐
and that I will remain anonymous.

I give consent for the interview to be transcribed ☐

I give consent for quotes from the interview transcript to be used in the research and publications and if relevant, to be presented in meetings and conferences. ☐

Therefore I _____ (NAME) voluntarily consent to participate in the research study conducted by Loreen Chikwira (Edgehill University).

| | | |
|---------------------|-----------|-------|
| _____ | _____ | _____ |
| Name of Participant | Signature | Date |

| | | |
|------------|-----------|-------|
| _____ | _____ | _____ |
| Researcher | Signature | Date |

For further information, please contact, Loreen Chikwira: 23845066@edgehill.ac.uk

Appendix C: Participant profile for the group interviews

Table 1 **Breakdown of the group profiles**

| | |
|--|---|
| | |
| Group 1 RRM (Manchester) | Ten women were in the group. The women were a Christian group that met regularly to support each other and share their faith. They were of different ages, between 25 – 50 years, had been in the UK for more than ten years and most of the women were married, with two women who were widows. |
| Group 2 ZPG (Reading) | Eight women attended the group interview. The group comprised of women of different ages, from age 22 years. Only two participants were not married. The main purpose of the group was to help influence the political situation in Zimbabwe and the group was made up of women who were asylum seekers and refugees and were in the country for more than eight years. The women did confess that they attended the group as part of supporting their asylum cases. |
| Group 3 AFG (Wolverham) | Ten women attended the group meeting. The women were a Christian group that met every week in Wolverhampton, and they had been in the country for more than ten years. The women were also of varying ages between 30 years to 65 years. All the women were married and only one woman was a widow. |
| Group 4 NCG (Northampton) | There were six women in the group and the purpose of the meeting on the day was to raise awareness of their work supporting African women in their local area. The group was led by a woman who was an asylum seeker, who started the group to support other African women in the same predicament. However, the women in attendance on the day were not all asylum seekers and refugees. Two of the women were married but had left their families in Zimbabwe. The facilitator of the group was divorced and had no children. |
| Group 5 DAR (Manchester) - Social group | Seven women attended the group meeting. The women were from different socio-economic groups and of different ages (25 -45 years). Some of the women were married and two of the participants were divorced. All the participants had children. |

Appendix D: Questions for the Focus Group Interviews

Thanks for taking part in my research and answering some questions. To reiterate, the information provided is anonymous and confidential. No names will be used. You do not have to answer any questions if you don't feel comfortable

1. When we say that we are Zimbabwean women in the UK, what do we mean by that?
2. How long have you all been in England?
3. How have your lives changed since settling in England in comparison to life in Zimbabwe?

Follow up questions were used to explore themes raised by the participants. For example, on the issue of parenting, I asked what the women would advise anyone struggling raising their children in this country.

4. Is there anything else you would like to add about living in England as a woman from Zimbabwe?

Appendix E: Questions on Individual Interviews

Thanks for taking part in my research and answering some questions. To reiterate, the information provided is anonymous and confidential. No names will be used. You don't have to answer any questions if you don't feel comfortable

Introductory questions: This information is so I know where people are from and how being from a different place might influence their experiences.

1. Where are you from in Zimbabwe?
2. How long have you lived in the UK?
3. Where do you live currently?
4. What is your marital status? / children?

.....

Main questions:

1. Tell me about your life in Zim and your journey to the England?
2. How has your life changed since coming to the England, in comparison to your life in Zimbabwe?
3. What aspects [if any] of your life in Zimbabwe, do you feel are important to you in England?
4. Is there anything else you would like to add about living in the UK as a Zimbabwean woman?

Follow up questions were used to explore themes raised by the participants.

Appendix F: Participant profile for the Individual interviews

Participants were recruited from the major cities, including London, Wolverhampton, Coventry, Birmingham, Sheffield. For confidentiality purposes, pseudonyms were used and there was no specific process for changing the participants names, both English and Shona names were used, with some names translated from one language to another, based on close meanings. I was also cautious in the translations that the names were not identifiable. In the following tables, I provide a breakdown of the participant profiles.

Table one provides a breakdown of the participants' profiles.

Table 2 **Breakdown of Participant profiles**

| Dee | She is 33 years old, a nurse who is single, no children and lives in Sheffield. She comes from a middle-class family. She was raised by her stepfather and mother. Her mother migrated first for economic reasons and later reunited with her family. However, Dee was left to finish school before being reunited with the rest of the family in Scotland. She trained as a nurse, as she felt there was nothing else, she could do at the time. She speaks Shona and English. |
|---------------|--|
| Grace | She is 34 years old who came to the UK as an 18-year-old visitor and later settled in the country. She speaks Shona and English. She was the youngest in her family with older brothers and she had been the first in her family to settle in the diaspora. She migrated to Britain as a visitor shortly after finishing her A 'Levels, after she was invited by her brother's then girlfriend. She then decided to settle permanently in the country and study Psychotherapy. She is 33-year-old, single and comes from a middle-class family and was raised in a middle-class area in Zimbabwe. She has since managed to help one of her brothers settle in Britain. |
| Zanele | Zanele is 40 years old, an accountant and doing a master's in project management. After nine months of living separate from her husband, she joined him under the family reunification as her husband was already in the country. She is married with two children and speaks Shona and English. She lives in Coventry with her husband, a doctor at a local hospital. She came from a middle-class family, but father lost all his wealth and this forms part of her narration and experiences. Her mother died when she was in high school and raised her siblings who are now successfully settled in other countries. |

| | |
|------------------|---|
| Ruvarashe | She works in Social care and is 38 years old. She speaks Shona and English and lives in Birmingham with her husband and four children. She came from 'lower' class family and was raised by her mother, a widow. Like Zanele, she settled in Britain after she got married in Zimbabwe and followed her husband to the diaspora. She got married at a young age and her experience of marriage was in the diaspora and her narrations were mainly focused on these experiences of negotiating her marriage with her husband's family who is also in the diaspora. |
| Chipo | She is a 43-year-old finance manager and lives in Birmingham with her daughter. She came from middle class family and speaks Shona and English. Her parents are still in Zimbabwe. She came to England with her husband on their way to Australia, where she had secured a university place to study and decided to stay in the Britain instead. Initially, she felt pressured from other Zimbabweans to train as a nurse but decided to continue with her training from Zimbabwe. Various struggles within her marriage resulted in separation for two years, reunification for five years, and later divorce. |
| Samantha | She is 35 years, who was a university student, married with two children. She migrated as part of family reunification, after she got married in Zimbabwe. Similar to Ruvarashe, her first experience of life as a married woman was in Britain. Her parents did not allow her to migrate to Britain as an unmarried young woman, thus, the husband had to go back to Zimbabwe, and they got married before she could travel. Her husband is a nurse and comes from a middle-class background and speaks Shona and English. |
| Tinotenda | She is 39 years, married with five children. She lives in London with her husband who was an accountant in Zimbabwe and retrained as a nurse after being advised by their landlord, who was also a migrant and had experienced similar struggles. She comes from a family of eleven with most of the siblings in England and parents still in Zimbabwe. She comes from a lower-class family and speaks Shona and English. She married at a young age (22). Tinotenda and her husband struggled to settle in the country and for the first two years, travelled between Zimbabwe and England with the children |
| Eli | She is 40 years old, divorced with one child and lives in London. She came from a middle-class family and migrated to England, as her mother had migrated first and brought her family over. She trained as a nurse, got married in the country. However, her husband left her and returned to Zimbabwe because he could not cope with life in England. Her narration was mainly on the challenges of relationships in the diaspora as a single mother. |
| Rufaro | Rufaro is in her forties and she settled in Britain in early 2000. She came from a lower-class family. She came as a visitor and later registered to train as a nurse. She is a lone parent who left her son in Zimbabwe and for ten |

| | |
|--|---|
| | years had not seen him. After her visa expired and she had trouble renewing it, she voluntarily returned to Zimbabwe and for two years lived in Zimbabwe and later came back to Britain, through friends who supported her. |
|--|---|

Appendix G: Example of building rapport with participant and co-constructing knowledge.

When asked about what aspects of Dee's life from Zimbabwe she still practised or retained as part of 'home', she shared about the food and experiences that were common to both of us. Food was part of the socio-cultural resources that participants used to maintain their cultures and acted as a connection to memories of 'home' in the diaspora.

1. **Dee:** *I am that person, that cooks sadza (staple food in Zimbabwe), by myself. I cook my sadza with zondo rangu (ox feet) or oxtail, then ndorova chi high fields changu [referencing people who are of a lower class]*
2. **Researcher:** *[laughs]*
3. **Dee:** *I love my sadza, and I think I spoke about it, respecting your elders. I will always respect my elders, you know.*
4. **Researcher:** *yeah*
5. **Dee:** *If there is anything from my culture that I carry, is the food, though ndiri musalad (musalad is reference to people who eat salad, referring to wealthy people who eat food associated with western people). I don't eat a lot, I eat sadza only (laughing)*
6. **Researcher:** *(laughs)*
7. **Dee:** *Whit sadza, I don't eat remhunga (sadza from Sorghum) just white sadza.*
8. **Researcher:** *oh, yeah! I only really discovered it, to be honest, all my life I never saw sadza made from Sorghum of Millet.*
9. **Dee:** *The red one, my mom when she was pregnant with my brother used to love it, with Kapenta fish (type of fish) and peanut butter.*
10. **Researcher:** *I have never seen it, I only saw it online, people talking about how healthy it is.*
11. **Dee:** *really? I have seen it, but I have never tasted it.*

The above excerpt demonstrates the shared experiences between the researcher and the participant.

Appendix H: Analysis of the Group Interviews using Palmer et al. (2010) 8 step protocol

The eight steps of the protocol are summarised below:

1. **Objects of Concern and Experiential Claims** -Identify what experiential claims participants make about the phenomenon in discussion and sort the objects of concern into themes.
2. **Positionality** – This is an assessment of the role of the facilitators and gate keepers.
3. **Roles and Relationships** – The researcher examines participants’ references to other people and how relationships are described, and the meanings attributed to the relationships
4. **Organisations and Systems** – An examination of organisations, systems and participants’ experiences and views of them.
5. **Stories** – This is an assessment of the stories the participants tell and what purpose they serve in explaining their experiences.
6. **Language** – the researcher monitors how language is used, and expressions used to explain phenomenon.
7. **Adaptation of Emergent Themes** – Researcher ensures that the themes answer the research questions and identifying further themes and sub themes.
8. **Integration of Multiple Cases** – This is the integration of themes from multiple focus group interviews.

Table 3: Themes derived from of IPA eight step protocol on group discussions.

| Category of Analysis | Grp 1: | Grp 2: | Grp 3: | Grp 4: | Grp 5: |
|----------------------|---|---|--|---|--|
| Emergent themes | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender roles and relationships • Changing family dynamics • Impact of globalization and colonization on Zimbabwean cultural identity. • Racism and discrimination | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The real Zimbabwean woman identity • Gender roles and relationships • Women's bodies as sites of contestation • Loss of identity • Contestation between personal identity vs cultural identity • commonalities of 'gender' with other ethnicities and 'races' • Representation of the diasporic space | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changing gender roles • Motherhood and transmission of culture • Not feeling like you belong. • Religious support • Social support • Women's bodies as sites of contestation • African woman defined by culture • Representation of the diasporic space | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transnational parenting – leaving children behind • Extended family as a source of support • Challenges to motherhood feeling like you don't belong • Cultural identity that is defined by culture | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Language and what it represents • Extended family support • Gender and gender roles • Changing gender roles • Motherhood and culture – loss of culture |
| Roles/ Relationships | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comparison with other women and cultures. • Powerless to discipline children. • Women's changing relationships to men – • Women staying in abusive relationships for | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A woman's relationship to a man, having children as epitomizing a successful Zimbabwean woman • Gender and communal roles are important to identity • Woman caters to husband, children, in-laws • Relationship of participants to each other as women – reinforcing cultural expectation. • Use of rural women's | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mothers' responsibility to their children Changing gender roles / reversed gender roles Use of rural women's relationship to men | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relationship to children who are back in Zimbabwe • England is not being home Zimbabwe – being home and missing it • Relationship to other Zimbabwean women- support | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women usurping men's authority in the diaspora • Mothers taking up a foreign culture in raising children with negative results • Women's economic power and its effective on gender roles • Relationship of children to parents – |

| Category of Analysis | Grp: 1 | Grp: 2 | Grp: 3 | Grp: 4 | Grp: 5 |
|----------------------|--|---|---|--|--|
| Orgs & Systems | Social services and children's rights that disempowers mothers. Council benefits contributing to divorce | | | Children's services, child taken away- sad situation | Immigration system – attending the event for papers |
| Stories | Woman's sacrifices for her children. | Patriarchal system being common to all cultures as well. | | Woman's child taken away | |
| Positionality | Pastor's wife and her influence on the group | Women's position to their culture (culture as a structure) | The gate keeper's role in recruitment of participants. The church service before interview and presence of the leaders in the building who were men | | The chair of the group was a man commanded the women to not talk nonsense to the researcher – his influence on the women |
| | | | | | |

| Category of analysis | Grp: 1 | Grp: 2 | Grp: 3 | Grp: 4 | Grp: 5 |
|----------------------|--|--|--|---|---|
| Language used | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roles based on power relations. • Language of protesting and negativity of the diaspora • Language of powerlessness to raise their children. • Threatened marriages • Language of frustration when it comes to balancing work and family | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Language on identity is one of confusion • Culture is viewed as oppressive, limiting. • Culture is seen as blinding women. • Women have no autonomy within culture. • Gender roles are so tied to women's identity that they would not know who they are without it. • Description of Zim women as hard workers, never rests. • Language of diaspora as a forbidden fruit. • The diaspora as a space for self-expression, freedom, • Positive language about the diaspora. • Language of conflict for others. • Language of frustration when it comes to balancing work and family. • Positive language on Zimbabwean women's work ethic. | <p>Language of frustration with the challenges of raising children in the diaspora</p> <p>Positive language on own culture and negative language of English culture-influence on women's dressing, behaviour and how they talk</p> <p>Frustration with these changes</p> <p>Positive language on Zimbabwean women's work ethic</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Language of sadness not being able to go home • Feelings of not belonging • Negative perceptions of changes in women's dressing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Negative perception of the diaspora • Negative views of English culture • Differences between different younger women and older women – young women use language of equality with men and older women use hierarchical language • Language of frustration and judgement with women who don't conform to cultural expectation in the diaspora |

Appendix I: Analysis of the Rufaro's account using Standard IPA

| Summary of the excerpt/ notes any interesting points raised | Participant transcript | Emerging themes |
|---|---|---|
| | Interviewer: you have talked about being proud of your identity and culture. What is it about it that you are proud of? | Culture and identity- rejection of some cultural beliefs |
| Connection of rural areas (Mhondoro) with who she is. | just that I am a Shona, born in Mhondoro, that's where my roots are. I don't know, I need to sit and think about it. So, was it really that says, I'm proud to be a Zimbabwean? | Cultural identity- language and place/location as part of cultural identity |
| Recognition of other cultures and their importance and worth as well. the different cultures don't seem to create or reinforce her culture and identity | R: I used to, but now living with other cultures in these societies we live in, I'm now realizing that hapana chinoshamisa about my culture. Because, if I think too much about it, I start looking down on other cultures because I'm so much aware of it. | Us vs them - exposure to other cultures and its impact on cultural identity |
| | you know, I shouldn't, I don't understand other people's cultures, so what makes me think that if I don't understand their culture, they will understand my culture. If I look down on my neighbour from a different culture and think, but in my culture, we don't do that, but then again, she's not from my culture. | |
| Although she doesn't think about culture a lot and has made comparison with other cultures. She talks about the importance of ceremonies/ rituals to her acknowledgement of her culture | Inini I have my own culture, and others have their own culture. So, I don't think about it too much. Maybe, I think about our culture, when there is an occasion, in our family, like, kuroora, nhamo, then I think in our culture, we do certain things, kubisa mari, | Rituals / ceremonies and their cultural meanings - kuroora, rufu |

Appendix J: Comparison of all the Group Interview Themes

Table 4

| Group | 1: RRM | 1: DAR | 3: Wolverhampton group | 4: Northampton Community Group | 5: RHOR |
|------------------------|---|--|---|---|--|
| Emerging themes | Changing gender roles and relationships Racism and discrimination | Gender roles and relationships Loss of identity | Changing gender roles | Challenges to motherhood | Language and what it represents. |
| | | Women's bodies as sites of contestation | Raising children and teaching children culture. | Extended family as a source of support. | Extended family support |
| | Impact of globalization and colonization on Zimbabwean cultural identity. | The real Zimbabwean woman identity- | Not feeling like you belong. | Transnational parenting – leaving children behind | gender roles and relationships |
| | Child discipline | The conflict between who I am and what culture expects | Religious support | feeling like you don't belong | Motherhood and culture – loss of culture |
| | Domestic abuse | Being able to be yourself in the diasporic space. | Social support | A cultural identity that is defined by culture | Challenges of raising children |
| | Relationships to other women of faith | All the women are the same regardless of race | How women dress and behave. | Relationship to children who are back in Zimbabwe | Perceptions of the diaspora based on age differences |

| | | | | | |
|--|---|--|--|---|--|
| | | | | Relationship to other Zimbabwean women | |
| | Immigration system and benefits, breaking up families | | Raising children in another culture | England is not home | Role of engagement in Zimbabwe politics in Britain |
| | Friendships with people from other cultures | commonalities of 'gender' with other ethnicities and 'races' loss of identity – 'the woman just caters to the men and his family'. | Representation of the diasporic space African woman defined by culture Use of rural women's relationship to men. | Difficulties of parenting Lack of support from extended family | |

Appendix K: Superordinate Themes and Sub-themes from the Individual Interviews.

Table 5.

| Superordinate theme | Sub-theme |
|---|--|
| Migration journey | Gendered migration |
| Geographical location and its cultural and social meanings | Rural vs urban centres Locations vs suburbs confusion between where one lives and where one come from (rural area). Geographical place as part of cultural identity |
| Typical African woman | The African woman vs the Independent woman |
| | Domestic help and maintaining of gender roles in the family |
| Gender, culture, class and identity – negotiating gender roles | Domestic help and maintaining of gender roles Social pressure and influences: marriage as a contested space for establishing cultural identity Marital status as part of cultural identity - Single parent Gender Socio-cultural expectations personal identity at odds with socio-cultural expectations |
| Family as a system of socialization | Family context: unstable and abusive home Gender socialisation education -Social class and access to resources Family culture vs Societal culture |
| Maintenance and negotiation of cultural identity in the UK | Women's bodies as sites for cultural and religious representations Immigration status and immigrant identity Reconstruction of cultural identity |
| Socio-cultural resources and how they are sued to maintain cultural identity | Religious resources Language as part of cultural identity. Social resources for support through the immigration journey Music and food as a source for maintaining cultural identity Rituals / ceremonies and their cultural meanings |
| New location and dislocation of identity | Identity , social location and immigration system Return migration- returning 'home' Coping strategies migrants use to deal with asylum system. |
| Challenges to motherhood | Transgenerational transmission of culture Learning Shona in the home Westernisation and the dangers to parenting |

| | |
|--------------------------------|---|
| Role of extended family | Extended family and their role in socialization |
| Social media influences | Facebook WhatsApp |